

# ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

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English Exposition by:-

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## DEDICATION

### THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED LORD RAM

I dedicate this Book to Lord Sri Ram who is my dearest of dear, most beloved, the essence of my life and being, and for whom, and for whose pleasure, and on whose behest, and on whose divine mission, this book is dedicated.

Nothing that I write is of my own creation. It is the Lord who is getting it done. So I deserve no credit. However, being an ordinary man like the rest of us, I may have committed errors, and for those I beg forgiveness. I hope this book will help to continue the great tradition of singing the glories of the different aspects of same indivisible one Divinity in order to meet diverse needs of the Soul, the Spirit, one such being to find peace and happiness amidst the surrounding turmoil of the world by being able to spend some time in the thoughts of the Divine Being, the same 'Parmatma', the same Lord known by different names in different tongues.

No creature is perfect; it's foolhardy to claim so. The best of paintings cannot replace the original; the best of words cannot express the original emotions and sentiments. Even the Lord was not satisfied by one flower or one butterfly—he went on endlessly evolving and designing newer forms. So, I have done my best, I have poured out my being in these books. Honestly, I am totally incompetent—it was the Lord who had done the actual writing and had moved my fingers as if they were merely an instrument in his divine hands. But nonetheless, it's a tribute to the Lord's glory that he does not take the credit himself, but bestows it to them whom he loves as his very own. And to be 'his very own' is indeed an unmatched honour. However, I still beg forgiveness for all omissions, commissions and transgressions on my part that I may have inadvertently made. It's the Lord's glories that I sing, rejoice in, write on and think of to the best of my ability. I hope my readers will also absorb the divine fragrance effusing from the flowers representing the Lord's books, enjoy the ambrosia pouring out of them and marvel at the Lord's stupendous glories.

I submit this effort at holy feet of my beloved Lord Ram whom even Lord Shiva had revered and worshipped. And surely of course to Lord Hanuman who was a manifestation of Shiva himself. Finding no words to express my profound gratitude to Ram, I just wish to remain quiet, and let my silence do the speaking and praying on my behalf.

I hope the reader will find my book useful and interesting. Since English is an international language, this book will help the English speaking world to access this masterpiece of classical Indian scriptural text.

“He leadeth me! O blessed tho't!  
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!  
What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be,  
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!” [A Hymn]

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia  
Author

## ANTHOLOGY OF THE ‘SANYAS’ UPANISHADS

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### Preface

This Book “The Sanyas Upanishads” (pronounced as *Samnyāsa Upaniṣadas*) brings together all the Upanishads that deal with the theme of ‘Sanyas’ (pronounced as “Sanyaas” or “Sun-yaas”) under a single cover. There are in all twenty such Upanishads, some fully dedicated to this theme, and others only in part. All of them have been included nonetheless.

The Book contains the original Sanskrit Text of the Upanishads, followed by their word-by-word Roman Transliteration, and then an English version with explanatory notes and brief commentary. Emphasis is laid on bringing out the essence of the text rather than getting bogged down by too much of technicalities, such as preferring to use general usage words that convey the subtle meaning of a phrase or verse rather than its too literal a meaning which may not at times unfold the subtle idea or philosophy implied in any given verse.

The following Upanishads have been included in this Book:

- (1) Rig Veda Upanishad— (i) Nirvano-panishad (Chapter 1.1).
- (2) Sam Veda Upanishads— (i) Arunu-panishad (Chapter 2.1), (ii) Maitreyanu-panishad (Chapter 2.2), (iii) Maitrey-panishad (Chapter 2.3), (iv) Sanyaso-Upanishad (Chapter 2.4), and (v) Kundiko-panishad (Chapter 2.5).
- (3) Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads— (i) Jabalo-panishad (Canto 4-6, Chapter 3.1), (ii) Paramhanso-panishad (Chapter 3.2), (iii) Subalo-panishad (Canto 12-13, Chapter 3.3), (iv) Niralambo-panishad (Chapter 3.4), (v) Bhikshuko-panishad (Chapter 3.5), (vi) Turiyato-panishad (Chapter 3.6), (vii) Yagyavalkya Upanishad (Chapter 3.7), (viii) Shatyani-panishad (Chapter 3.8).
- (4) Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads— (i) Avadhuto-panishad (Chapter 4.1), (ii) Kathrudro-panishad, verse nos. 1-11 (Chapter 4.2), (iii) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 4 and 37 (Chapter 4.3).
- (5) Atharva Veda Upanishads— (i) Narad Parivrajako-panishad (Chapter 5.1), Paramhans-Parivrajako-panishad (Chapter 5.2), and (iii) Parbrahmo-panishad (Chapter 5.3).

The Sanyas Upanishads are very evocative and spiritually uplifting by their very nature inasmuch as they kindle in a person a strong desire to first explore and then experience the eclectic quality and the depth of the ecstasy, bliss, joy and happiness that comes when a person attains a level of life and a plane of living that is far

superior to and more abiding and rewarding than what he is accustomed to in this world.

A study of these Sanyas Upanishads helps a seeker to first understand the finer nuances of the concept of 'Sanyas', of what Sanyas is all about and what benefits it grants to its practitioners, then he endeavours to explore this eclectic spiritual path diligently, and finally attain that exalted state of transcendental ethereal existence that would make him taste the nectar of eternity and blessedness that comes in with the bonus reward of the highest level of ecstasy, bliss and beatitude. Such a successful Sanyasi becomes self-and-truth realised. He begins to actually experience and live in a plane of existence that is ethereal and transcendental in nature, an existence that is spiritually most rewarding, and is unaffected by and beyond the level of life and living in a gross, mundane, material and perishable world of sense objects.

The reading of the Sanyas Upanishads profoundly influences the mind and the intellect of a seeker of truth and true peace; these Upanishads kindle in him a deep desire to think and explore that uncharted territory in the spiritual realm that would bestow upon him an eternal sense of joy, happiness, bliss, beatitude and felicity so much that he feels himself as being the most blessed soul.

Now let us see what 'Sanyas' pertains to from the perspective of a person's life in this world. The ancient scriptures have divided the life of a Hindu man into four segments or sections of roughly twenty-five years each. They were devised from a practical point of view.

A young man must first study and acquire adequate skills that would prepare him to meet the challenges of life ahead, to stand on his own two feet in this world and be productive during his life. The first quarter of life was devoted to this use.

In the second quarter, after graduating, he steps into the world to shoulder the responsibilities of his family. This is when he marries and enters into a vocation or profession to make his life productive and create the ground for the next generation. But this second phase of his phase is very extracting upon him; it is toilsome and arduous, and it saps him of his energy and deprives him of his peace and true happiness. He realises that true happiness and peace had all along eluded and evaded him; his body and spirit revolt as they yearn for some rest and peace in the declining phase of life. A person realises that he had been running behind a mirage in his pursuit of joy, happiness, peace and tranquillity.

So the next phase of life was devised to let him slowly ease out of his troubles and shift the burden of the world on the shoulders of the next and younger generation. This is the third phase of his life.

By the time he has reached a ripe old age, i.e. the fourth quarter of life, an intelligent and wise man thinks for himself about the events of his life and what was there for him in it. Now that he has sufficient time at hand, he begins to think and wonder and analyse the events of his life. He discovers that in spite of the best he could invest in his life in order to get happiness, joy, pleasure and comfort, whatever semblance of these virtues he got were only superficial and transient; he discovers that he had been trying to give joy and happiness to others while depriving his ownself of these rewards; and that he had never found abiding peace and rest in his life no matter what he did. So while passing through the last half of the third phase of life he finds that he is much better off now in terms of peace of mind and happiness as compared to what he was earlier when he had transited from the second phase and had entered this third phase. So it becomes obvious to him that lasting peace and its

accompanying bliss lies not in the gross world of material sense objects but somewhere else.

So when he enters the fourth and the final phase of life he has a sincere yearning and a burning desire to attain nothing else and nothing more than an abiding sort of peace, an eternal rest and true joy for his own 'self'. It is this last phase which is called 'Sanyas'. When pursued with conviction and commitment, this Sanyas phase of life leads the person to his final destination of life—which is to attain deliverance from this cycle of birth and death, to obtain liberation from the bondage of the gross body and its relationship with this world of material sense objects, and to obtain emancipation and salvation of the soul. For a true and accomplished Sanyasi, living in this world no longer matters because he has attained that state of existence that transcends the grossness of the world as well as of his own body. He longer is a person with a gross body having physical sense organs, but an ethereal self that identifies its self with the pure consciousness known as the Atma. This 'Atma' is the Sanyasi's 'true self', and it is different from his gross physical body.

Since all emotions and sentiments and feeling that a person has are limited to his gross body and its relationship with the outside world, a true and self-realised Sanyasi is able to live happily in this world as he is immune to all these things because he identifies himself with his Atma and not his physical gross body.

The above description of what leads to Sanyas is to indicate that when a person has reached this stage he has already had the experience of the misery and the pain associated with life in this gross mundane world, as well as the fact that true and real happiness and joy was somewhere else. This means he is already motivated to search for true peace and true happiness for his self, and so the groundwork is ready. Then his journey towards 'self realisation' and 'Brahm realisation' becomes all the more easier and free from falling prey to worldly temptations. This would pave the way for his liberation and deliverance at the height of Sanyas. So Sanyas comes naturally and willingly to him.

However, there may be a case when a person is very thoughtful and analytical from his early life. He discovers the superficial nature of worldly happiness and the artificiality of the world itself that even in his early days of life he develops a sense of profound renunciation for everything that is transient, that is superficial and misleading. He distances himself from anything that won't give him some eternal fruit of life, i.e. an abiding sense of joy, happiness, tranquillity, peace and bliss. Therefore, such a person is obviously very fortunate inasmuch as he has an early start and an abundance of time to succeed in his efforts at obtaining the spiritual reward of the feeling of blessedness, and of obtaining eternal peace and bliss that accompanies liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation of the soul, which is the ultimate aim of Sanyas.

Now, the four phases in the life of a person are called the 'four Ashrams'. They are called respectively (i) Brahmacharya Ashram, (ii) Grihastha Ashram, (iii) Van-Prastha Ashram, and (iv) Sanyas Ashram. Let us examine the four phases of life in more detail as follows.

(a) Brahmacharya—this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style of a boarding school. (b) Grihastha—when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called Grihastha Ashram which is a householder's life. He marries,

raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life alongside the dealings with this deceptive world with all its accompanying horrifying problems.

(c) Vanprastha—this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) Sanyas—this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting-off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation, and begging for food for survival while single-mindedly endeavouring for emancipation and salvation. This phase of Sanyas also has many stages depending upon the spiritual elevation and accomplishments of the aspirant, viz. Kutichak, Bahudak, Hansa, Paramhans, Turiyatit and Avadhut.

In brief, the 'Brahmacharis' are celibates students who must exercise the greatest self-restraint in order to concentrate their energy on their studies. It is the first phase of life. The 'Grihastha' is the householder. After study, the student marries to raise a family and contribute to the continuation of the cycle of creation. This marks the second phase of life. The 'Vaana-prastha' is a person who hands over the responsibilities of worldly affairs to his heir and prepares to lead a retired life, literally though the word means to 'retire to the forest'. This is the third phase of life. And finally, the 'Sanyasi' is a person who has renounced the world and spends his time in meditation and contemplation. This is the fourth and the final phase of life.

These four Ashrams, their characteristic features and virtues are described in detail in an Upanishad called *Ashramo-panishad* belonging to the Atharva Veda tradition. Refer also to *Kathrudra Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 3 in the context of one taking the vows of Sanyas, the renunciate way of life which is the fourth and the last phase in the life of a man which prepares him for his final liberation and deliverance from this world.

The *Duration* of each Ashram—The *Naradparivrajak Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, Canto 1, verse no. 2 states the number of years one Ashram should ideally consist of. According to it, Brahmacharya Ashram lasts for twelve years, Grihastha Ashram for twenty five years, Vanparashtha Ashram for another twenty five years, and then comes the Sanyas Ashram for the rest of one's life.

There are many Upanishads spread over all the five divisions of the Vedas which deal with the concept of 'Sanyas' (pronounced as 'Sanyaas') in elaborate detail, and elucidate on all the finer points of this form of life which is considered the best and the most exalted form of existence that a wise, erudite and enlightened person is expected to live once true enlightenment dawns upon him, leading him to total renunciation of this artificial world, creating a sense of complete dispassion and detachment towards it.

The word 'Sanyas' as a noun broadly means 'a life of renunciation and abandonment of all worldly desires, attachments, passions, needs etc. and turning towards self-realisation in preparation for the final exit from this temporal world'. As a verb, it refers to the actual leading of such a life. A 'Sanyasi' is a person who decides to lead a life of Sanyas, diligently and faithfully.

All the different Upanishads on the subject of Sanyas describe its various aspects in varying details, such as about its meaning, how to get initiated into it, its basic principals, a detailed guideline of the various do's and don'ts (e.g.



Sanyasopanishad, 2/104-108) for a meaningful life of Sanyas, its symbols, its tenets, its various stages, its pitfalls as well as how to avoid them, its rewards, its eligibility criterion etc. (e.g. Narad-parivrajak, Canto 3, and Sanyaso-panishad, Canto 2, verse 1-7) etc. For details, the reader should see the main text of these Upanishads, English version of all have been written by this humble author and published in separate volumes according to the Veda they relate to.

However, here we shall see the broad aspects of Sanyas and its general classification. This is because it will help to get a general idea of the concept.

The Atharva Veda's *Annapurna Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse no. 47 describes 'Sanyas' as follows—"A high degree of renunciation, detachment, dispassion, non-involvement and contentedness in which all the Sankalps (volition, ambition, determination, resolution etc.) vis-à-vis the world are exhausted is known as 'Sanyas'."

The Sanyasi is one who has been successful in exercising control over his mind and the sense organs (five organs of perception—eyes, nose, tongue, ears and skin, and their respective senses—sight, smell, taste, hearing and bodily comfort and gratification or touch). He has also controlled his organs of action (hands, legs, mouth, genitals and excretory). He is completely dispassionate towards and detached from the mundane, artificial and illusionary world of materialistic comforts, because he has realised the futility of its pursuit as well as its falsehood. He has realised that all this is like a dream; even his body is an illusionary self and will decay and perish like the whole world, and that his true identity is the Atma which is, inter alia, imperishable, pure, conscious, eternal, universal, immanent and one like the supreme Atma of the cosmos which is called Brahma. He treats his body like a temporary cage for his pure self which is the Atma, and therefore endeavours to fly off into freedom like a trapped bird fleeing from its cage at the first opportunity.

There are many words used as synonyms for a Sanyasi —Parivrajak (परिव्राजक), Yati (यति), Avadhut (अवधूत), Hans (हंस), Paramhans (परमहंस), Yogi (योगी) etc. Ascetics and hermits, monks, friars and wandering mendicants are also Sanyasis because they have renounced the world along with its allurements as well as the comforts and pleasures of a family life. But if this renunciation is only superficial just in order to fulfill religious obligations or to show off to the world how pious and holy a person is, or to please the world in some other way, or have been done under some compulsion, whereas in fact the person is internally attracted towards and attached to the world, then such a Sanyasi is a deceitful imposter. Some of the sages and seers cannot be called a Sanyasi in the strict sense of the word because they had wives (e.g., sages Vashistha, Atri etc.) while others are known to have children (e.g., sage Garg, Manu, Gautam). On the other hand, taking into account the basic tenet, objective and essential meaning of 'Sanyas'—which is internal, sincere, honest and truthful renunciation and desire for self realisation— a householder could also be a Sanyasi in theory and reality if he is totally detached mentally from the external world surrounding him, whereas a hermit or an ascetic who pretends to be a renouncer of worldly desires but covertly yearns for it, is nothing else but an imposter, a cheat who is not only cheating the world but also himself.

The emphasis should be on honest renunciation, and it should have its roots in the heart and the mind. External symbols and life style aid the process of Sanyas; they only create an ambiance and psychological foundation conducive to following the path of Sanyas and would help the aspirant in his pursuits of renunciation or leading a life of a sincere and honest reclusive ascetic or a Sanyasi. But if his mind and heart

are riveted in the world of sensual comforts, then he better not cheat himself and others by becoming a pseudo Sanyasi.

A Sanyasi should abandon all attachments and infatuations with this world and contemplate upon the great sayings of the Vedas— That art thou, Thou art that, Thou art Brahm, I am Brahm, All is Brahm, I am thou, and Thou am I etc. which lead him to be firmly established in the concepts of non-duality of Brahma and his own pure conscious Atma.

The life of a man is broadly divided into four phases of 20-25 years each— (i) Brahmacharya— The 1st phase when a person observes continence, celibacy and abstains from indulgences of all kinds, stays with his teacher to study and serve him, and generally leads a regimental and disciplined life of austerity, acquires skills which empowers him to stand on his own two feet as he enters the second phase of life.

(ii) Grihastha— The 2nd householder phase when he marries, raises a family, looks after it, earns money and creates wealth. When his son or heir is mature, he is expected to pass over worldly responsibilities to him and head for the forest, which is the third stage.

(iii) Vanprastha— The 3rd phase which entails going to the forest. This system of going to the forest was envisioned in earlier times, but in modern society it may not be possible and prudent. The basic idea was to step aside from active participation in daily chores of the households affairs and not interfere with the life of the new generation which might not like the ‘old man’s constant nagging’. A Vanprastha was supposed to act as an advisor from a respectable distance. This 3rd phase of life was a preparatory stage for the rigors of the 4th and the final phase called Sanyas. If the householder could not bear with the rigid and lonely life of a Vanprastha, he was not supposed to take to Sanyas. Besides this, one important factor which distinguished a Vanprastha from a Sanyasi was that the former was usually accompanied by his wife and maintained a causal and cursory link with the family and son if it was deemed very necessary, while the latter (Sanyasi) was expected to abandon all contacts with a female as well as all other members of his family, remain all to himself, beg for food, be a wandering vagabond and care not at all for his body as he prepares himself mentally to die. It is also prescribed that if true renunciation sprouts in the heart of a person even when he is young and still in the early stages of the 1st phase of life (Brahmacharya) he can still take to Sanyas directly without passing through the other two phases (refer Yagyavalkya Upanishad, verse no. 1 of Shukla Yajur Veda).

A ‘Parivrajak’ Sanyasi is one who wanders in this world spreading, wherever he goes, the good and truthful knowledge about the Lord, the Atma and Brahma as well as about the truthful nature of the existence and futility of worldly pursuits, of the falseness and artificiality of this world, and the ultimate aim of life which is emancipation and salvation as well as liberation from the fetters that shackles a creature to this mundane world of artificiality and provides its soul with deliverance. So he roams about for the spiritual betterment of others as well as for seeking liberation for his own Atma from the various shackles that tie it down to this world. He must, inter alia, exercise control over himself as a pre-requisite of Sanyas, because everything else will revolve around this ‘self-restraint’ factor.

Once having entered this last phase of life, he is ordained, as a preliminary requirement at the initial stage, to wear the following marks— hold a wooden staff and a water pot, wear a sacred thread, a loin cloth, a sling bag, and a ‘Pavitri’ (a brush of Kush grass to sprinkle water for purification purposes and it is worn like a ring on one of the fingers). These should be regarded by him as symbols of Brahma. As he

progresses in his spiritual pursuits, all these external symbols become redundant and should be progressively discarded. This fact has been highlighted in the ‘Turiyatito-panishad’ of Shukla Yajur Veda.

There are six categories of Sanyasis according to ‘Sanyaso-panishad’, 2/23 of Sam Veda— (i) Kutichak, (ii) Bhahudak, (iii) Hans, (iv) Paramhans, (v) Turiyatit and (vi) Avadhut. The last is the highest state of Sanyas. This categorization is akin to the various stages that a student has to pass before he becomes a truly enlightened scholar in the spiritual realm. The characteristic features of these six classes of Sanyasis are briefly enumerated below:-

(a) Kutichak —also know as Kutichakra, has the following marks —a tuft of hair on the back of his tonsured head, wears a sacred thread and a loin cloth, carries a staff, a water pot, a sheet to cover the body, and a tattered over-garment (like an overcoat). He worships his parents and Guru, stays at a place, possesses a pot to cook food, a light axe and a spade (for emergencies) and a sling bag with him. He repeats holy Mantras, eats cooked cereals, and wears a white, vertical Tilak Mark having 3 erect lines on his forehead. He also carries a trident. [Refer Sanyaso-panishad, 2/24.]

(b) Bahudak —the only difference between this type of Sanyasi and the former is that a Bahudak does not cook his own meal. He begs for cooked food and eats only eight mouthfuls. [Refer Sanyaso-panishad, 2/25.]

(c) Hans—he has a lock of long matted hairs on his head (forming a crown), does not stay at one place, begs for food and wears only a loin cloth on his body. [Refer Sanyaso-panishad, 2/26 and Jabalo-panishad, Section 4-6.]

(d) Paramhans —he does not keep a tuft of hair or a sacred thread. He uses his cupped hands as a pot (instead of regular pot) to take (accept) food from not more than 5 households. He wears a loin cloth, wraps a sheet around him, smears ash over the body, and holds a wooden staff. He discards all the rest. [Refer Sanayso-panishad, 2/27, Paramhanso-panishad, verse no. 2-4, and Jabalo-panishad, Section 4-6.]

(e) Turiyatit —the characteristics of this Sanyasi have been elaborately described in Turiyatito-panishad. Basically, he takes food directly in his mouth like a cow (i.e. instead of using his hands to eat, he uses his mouth to imbibe food directly, like a cow, from his cupped hands in which the food is held), begs from only 3 houses and accepts only fruits or cooked cereals. He firmly believes that his true identity is the pure conscious Atma, and his body is a lifeless, gross and perishable entity. [Refer Sanyaso-panishad, 2/28 and Turiyatito-panishad.]

(f) Avadhut —this is the most exalted stage in the life of a Sanyasi. He has become equivalent to the imperishable supreme Brahma or Atma, is free from worldly bondages, is an embodiment or a living example of the great sayings of the Vedas (such as, ‘I am Brahma’, ‘You are Brahma’, ‘Whatever that exists is Brahma’, ‘Brahma is Atma’, ‘Nothing but Atma is true’ etc.). He does not have to follow any formal set of rules or tradition or sacraments or rituals. He accepts food like a python—i.e. accepts whatever comes to him without searching for it; he accepts that food which is offered to him by someone who comes to his place to give it to him instead of his going out to beg for the same. He remains ever engrossed in self contemplation, stays alone on mountains, in caves, under trees, and sleeps on the ground on a bed of grass. [Refer Sanyaso-panishad, 2/29-30, Avadhuto-panishad, verse no. 2.]

Besides the above classification based on their physical characteristic features, behaviours, life styles and symbols, the Sanyaso-panishad, canto 2, verse no. 18-22 of Sam Veda enumerates and defines the 4 others categories under which Sanyasis can be classified— (i) Vairagya, (ii) Gyan, (iii) Gyan-Vairagya, and (iv) Karma.

Similarly, a special type of Sanyasi called ‘Vishnu Linga’ has been described in Shatyayani Upanishad belonging to the Shukla Yajur Veda. The word ‘Ling’ refers to the external signs or behavioural patterns that help to identify a person as a Sanyasi, to distinguish him from the rest of the society. A Vishnu Linga Sanyasi is one who is an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu who has completely dissociated himself honestly from this deluding material world and pursues the path of spiritual enhancement leading to attaining his Lord Vishnu, the supreme Lord through the medium of self realisation and self purification.

Broadly, these 4 classes of Sanyasi can be defined as follows— (i) A ‘Vairagya Sanyasi’ is one who sees falsehood in the visible world, has developed detachment from it early on in life, and renunciation is a natural, inborn trait in him, though he may not be a scholar. (ii) A ‘Gyan Sanyasi’ is one who has learnt about the falseness of the world by studying the scriptures and is consequentially filled with disenchantment with it. (iii) A ‘Gayan-Vairagya Sanyasi’ is one who has experienced everything that is worth experiencing in this world, and has become wisened to the transient and perishable nature of worldly happiness. Being thus experienced and first hand witness, he realises the truth of what is said in the scriptures, and this knowledge or Gyan, which he has got out of experience and witnessing, nourishes and bolsters renunciation in him and fills him with dispassion and detachment towards this artificial and perishable world, he has Gyan as well as Vairagya. (iv) ‘Karma Sanyasi’ is one who takes to Sanyas at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of life as a matter of routine or course as an expected way of life as ordained by the scriptures and by tradition, fearing ignominy, censor and reproach from the society if he does not do so, though renunciation has not sprouted in his heart.

We can cite some example of great sages who belonged to different classes of Sanyasi as described above— (i) Kutichak —Gautam, Bharadwaj, Yagyavalkya and Vashistha; (ii) Paramhans —Samvartak, Aruni, Shwetketu, Jadbharat, Dattatreya, Shukdeo, Vamdeo, Haritak (Bhikshuko-panishad, verse no. 1, 5), Durbasa, Ribhu, Nidaagh and Raivtak (Jabalo-panishad, 6/1).

The five external signs or symbols held by such Sanyasi are the following—a trident, sacred thread, loin cloth, a tattered sling bag (or a water pot), and a ‘Pavitri’ (a brush to sprinkle water for purification purposes; also a finger ring made of Kush grass). (Shatyayani-panishad, verse no. 6 and Kundiko-panishad, verse no. 10). The signs on his body are the tuft of hair, tonsured head and a Tilak Mark on the forehead, but as he progresses in his spiritual pursuits, it is expected that he would abandon all these external visible signs of Sanyas and remain without them (refer Yagyavalkya Upanishad, verse no. 7 and Sanyaso-panishad, canto 2, verse no. 8).

A true Sanyasi should treat the divine symbol OM as incorporating all the symbols of Sanyas (Shatyayani Upanishad, verse no. 8), and should be always engrossed in contemplation upon the supreme Brahma and his pure-self (Sanyaso-panishad, 2/36-73).

Generally speaking, he should eat just sufficient enough to sustain his body, and that too by begging. He should treat his body as a carrier of the Atma till the time comes for the latter to discard it and find freedom by merging itself in the supreme Atma or Brahma. He should not stay in one place for long, and should select a lonely place for such temporary dwelling. He should not even accept disciples (Sanyaso-panishad, 2/98), nor worship Gods or idols (Sanyaso-panishad, 2/74-75, 97). Among other things, he should abhor contacts with a woman and guard against anger and wrathfulness (Yagyavalkya Upanishad, 14-23, 28-31).

What is the purpose of taking the rigorous vows of Sanyas? This has been answered precisely in Kundiko-panishad, verse no. 5-9; his ways of thinking have been enumerated in verse nos. 14-17, 23-27, and his basic life style in verse no. 11-13, and 28 of this Upanishad. In its verse no. 28-27, his broad, all-encompassing views about the Atma and his enlightened approach towards his non-dual self, leading to what is called 'self realisation' has been highlighted. Similar eclectic and ethereal views are also expressed in Sanyaso-panishad, canto 2, verse nos. 36-73.

The Characteristics of a true Vairagi— person who is has true renunciation— has been described in the *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 4 and 37 of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition. Now let us see what it has to say on the subject—

“verse no. 4 = He should abandon all kind of attractions, attachments, infatuations, longings or a sense of belonging that he might have for anything—i.e. he should develop profound degree of renunciation as mentioned earlier in verse no. 2 above. He should learn to exercise the greatest of restraint on his self and the organs of the gross body.

Instead, he should be firmly of the view that his true 'self' is nothing else but pure consciousness which is a mere neutral witness of everything, without getting emotionally attached with anything. That is, he should develop the noble and auspicious view that 'I am that pure immaculate cosmic Consciousness which is a neutral witness to everything in this world.' [A witness is supposed to be neutral, unemotional, detached and uninvolved in the happening. This helps him to observe things in the correct perspective and his version is regarded as authentic as opposed to biased witnesses who would see things from a pre-conceived angle and develop a tainted view of the same event. If a witness to an event is not dispassionate and neutral, then he is not worth relying; he is not a true and honest witness. Therefore, a sincere seeker of the knowledge of Brahm should, and is expected to, inculcate the great virtues of complete dispassion for, detachment with and non-involvement in the world and its affairs.] (4).

“verse no. 37 = A Vairagi (a renunciate and dispassionate person who has sacrificed his desires for worldly charms in order to attain spiritual emancipation and salvation) abandons all forms of contacts or companies with everything related to 'grossness and untruth' such as the world and the body just like a person running away from a snake or throwing one if it is caught by mistake. [That is, he is terribly scared of this contact and treats it as dangerous as the snake. He might be entangled in it till he has not become aware of the Truth, but once this awareness comes he would not lose a single moment in discarding the world and the body.]

A Vairagi desirous of sacrificing the sensual attractions of worldly charms and the overwhelming urge for sense gratification, collectively called 'Kaam' (literally lust, yearnings, lasciviousness and passions; desire for sensual gratification and enjoyments of the material world and its juicy attractions) on the altar of nobler pursuits and higher goals of life should abandon contact with a beautiful woman just like the case when people shun a rotting corpse and go away from it at a distance because of the foul and loathsome stink emanating from it.

He abandons all the sense objects of this enchanting but entrapping and deluding material world like they were horrible poison though this world is very difficult to eliminate and shun. [That is, he would have to make conscious effort to renounce this material world. It is a difficult proposition and would require strong will and resolve.]

Such exalted persons are called 'Param Hans', literally one who is as pure and uncorrupted as the divine Swan<sup>1</sup>, as they regard their own selves (i.e. their soul and true 'self') as an image of the supreme Lord known as Vasudeo (Vishnu the sustainer and protector of the creation, the Lord who had incarnated himself as Varaaha). With this eclectic and sublime concept of the 'self', they become spiritually enlightened and think in this term—'I am indeed Vasudeo'. [A wise and self-realised person understands that his true 'self' known as the Atma is none other than the supreme Atma of creation. It is indeed the microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness that pervades uniformly in all the units of creation, whether as the mortal individual living being or the immortal entities known as Gods. Vasudeo is another name of Lord Vishnu, the personified Supreme Being. Hence a self-realised person develops the enlightened view that his Atma is as divine, ethereal and sublime as the cosmic Atma that lives in Lord Vishnu, i.e. there is no difference between the two. This is the great 'Advaitya' or non-dual philosophy propounded and espoused by the Upanishads.] (37).

These are just a few points cited here to illustrate the concept of true Sanyas. It is futile to go into details here because all the texts pertaining to Sanyas are themselves very exhaustive and detail here would only be repeating the texts uselessly.

The Holy Bible also lays down certain rules for wandering friars that are very similar to those laid down for mendicant Sanyasis as described in the various Upanishads. These tenets are almost identical. When Jesus Christ sent forth his twelve disciples as his messengers, he laid down certain guidelines for them, which are, inter alia, the following in the words of the Holy Bible itself—'These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, ....freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purse, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence' (Gospel, St. Mathew, 10/5, 8-10).

The Holy Bible further says that Jesus ordained his twelve messengers as follows— 'And into whatever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your word, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet' (Gospel, St. Mathew, 10/11-14).

The doctrine for the Sanyas way of life of detachment, dispassion and austerity, the philosophy of non-importance of the body and total renunciation is beautifully encapsulated in these words of the Bible — 'Take no thought of your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air...your heavenly father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they; ....if God so clothe the grass of the field, shall he not much more clothe you....but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you, take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things itself' (Gospel, St. Matthew, 6/25-26, 30-31, 33-34). This remarkable doctrine has clear resonance in Sanyaso-panishad.

Regarding abstaining from ‘Mada’ (ego, haughtiness, false pride, arrogance, hypocrisy, vanity), Jesus has this to say — ‘Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam of thine own eyes’ (Gospel, St. Matthew, 7/5). The repeated restraint imposed by the Upanishads that these texts should not be taught to unworthy disciples is also emphasised by Jesus Christ when he says — ‘Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you’ (Gospel, St. Matthew, 7/6).

The basic idea in following the righteous path is to make one’s life worthy of living. Discipline of mind, body and demeanors, commitment and dedication towards the goal of life, are essential prerequisites for any success. A disciplined and regulated life only goes to improve our selves. To follow the principles laid down in the various Upanishads helps us to make the tree of life good. ‘Either make the tree good and his fruit good. Or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit’ (Gospel, St. Matthew, 12/33). Sure enough, even for those who do not believe in anything as Brahma or Atma, at least this more worldly consideration to be called good and wise, to be known as a good person and to be shown respect, should propel them to a righteous way of life.

Almost the whole Book of Ecclesiastes (the 21st book) of the Old Testament of the Holy Bible is full of wisdom identical and very much in consonant with what the Upanishads teaches a person who is desirous of taking the vows of Sanyas. Though at times certain of its verses (e.g. 1/1-10, 9/2-10) might appear contrary to the tenets of profound Sanyas, but only when they are read by a fool and out of context, for when the same verses are read properly and with an intelligent mind they would more than others tell us what Sanyas really is about.

This Book will help all interested readers delve deeper into the philosophy of the concept of ‘Sanyas’ as enunciated and elucidated in the great Upanishads which are in themselves exhaustive treatises on all matters related to metaphysics and spiritual attainment.

I offer this humble effort of mine at the feet of my beloved and revered Lord Sri Ram with a prayer to excuse me for any errors of understanding or interpretation that may have influenced my writing.

No one can ever claim to be the final and an undisputed authority, an unchallenged expert on the eclectic philosophy and the profundity of metaphysical principles and concept as enunciated and elucidated by the Upanishads, but one can surely make the best of his effort as inspired in him by the Lord God. I therefore beg from my esteemed readers that they should forgive me and overlook any errors of omission and commission that may have inadvertently crept in while I was writing this Book despite of my vigilance and diligence. If the overall idea and philosophy related to the theme of “Sanyas” as envisioned in the Upanishads has been conveyed and relevant information disseminated in a simple way through the medium of this Book, as far as my limited intellectual capability allowed me to explore them and put them forward to the reader, then I will regard my effort and toil to have been successful.

Now, before proceeding further, let me say a small prayer to the Lord God to whom this Book “The Sanyas Upanishads” is dedicated.

“I am short of words to pray to my Lord, but nevertheless my heart springs out like a fountain with these hymns from the Holy Bible— ‘Have mercy upon me, o God,

according to your loving kindness.... and cleanse me from my sins... wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow... create in me a clean heart, o God, and renew a steadfast spirit in me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy Spirit from me... restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your generous Spirit (Bible, Psalm, 51/1-2, 7-8, 10-12). Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink... draw near to my soul and redeem it (Psalm, 69/14, 18). I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like the owl of the desert; I lie awake, and am like a sparrow alone of the housetop... hear my prayer, o Lord, and let my cry come to you (Psalm, 102/7,1). Truly my soul silently waits for God, from him comes my salvation. He is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense... and my refuge is in God (Psalm, 62/1-2, 7). O God you are my God, early will I seek you, my soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you, in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water... you have been my help, therefore in the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind you, your right hand upholds me' (Psalm, 63/1, 7-8). I am waiting in life's departure lounge, waiting for my flight to freedom. But till that time, 'I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being' (Psalm, 104/33). 'I will praise the name of God with a song; and will magnify him with thanks giving' (Psalm, 69/30).

'Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths (4). Lead me in your truth and teach me. For you are the God of my salvation. On you I will wait all the day (5). Remember, O Lord, your tender mercies and your loving kindness (6), for your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great (11). My eyes are ever towards the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net (15). Turn yourself to me and have mercy on me, for I am desolate and afflicted (16). Look on my afflictions and my pain and forgive all my sins (18). O keep my soul and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in you (20). [The Bible, Psalm, 25]

'One thing I have desire of the Lord; that I will seek (Psalm, 27/4), Bow down your ear to me, deliver me speedily. Be my rock of refuge, a fortress of defense to save me (2). For you are my rock and my fortress. Therefore for your name's sake, lead me and guide me (3) .... for you are my strength (4). Into your hands, I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth (5). I trust in you, O Lord; I say 'You are my God' (14), my times are in your hands (15), make your face shine upon your servant; save me for your mercy's sake (16). [Bible, Psalm, 31]

'The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusted in him and I am helped. Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise him (Psalm, 28/7). To the end that my glory may sing praise to you and not be silent. Oh Lord my God, I will give thanks to you for ever (Psalms 30/12). May my speech (read my books) be pleasing to him, and as for me, I will rejoice in the Lord' (Bible, psalm, 103). So, help me, oh Lord! And 'finally, my bretheren, rejoice in the Lord' (Bible, Philippians, 3/1)."

Amen!!

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## ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

### Chapter 1: Sanyas Upanishads of the Rig Veda

#### (1.1) Nirvano-panishad // Nirvana Upanishad:

In this Upanishad, the characteristic features, qualities, virtues, the way of life and the sacraments to be observed by a 'Sanyasi' (i.e. one who has taken a sincere and honest vow of total renunciation from this world and lives life of a recluse; an ascetic living in a forest preparing for death, spending his time in observing austerities, doing penances and meditation, contemplating upon his pure-self and studying the scriptures to gain knowledge and enlightenment) are described in detail along with their significance, symbolism and metaphysical aspects. The word 'Nirvana' means liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation, extinguishing of all worldly attachments and allurements, to be of calmed desires and free from yearnings, to be freed from the bondage of existence in this temporal, mundane and illusionary world. This Upanishad, therefore, highlights the virtues, qualities and mental outlooks that a seeker/aspirant for the final liberation and deliverance from the fetters that tie him to this world should possess as well as the paths and the sacred sacraments that he ought to follow. It has only one Canto listing 88 such qualities or virtues.

अथ निर्वाणोपनिषदं व्याख्यास्यामः ।<sup>१</sup> परमहंसः सोऽहम् ।<sup>२</sup>  
परिव्राजकाः पश्चिमलिङ्गाः ।<sup>३</sup> मन्मथक्षेत्रपाला ।<sup>४</sup> गगनसिद्धान्त ।<sup>५</sup>  
अमृतकाल्लोलनदी ।<sup>६</sup> अक्षयं निरञ्जनम् ।<sup>७</sup> निःसंशयः ऋषिः ।<sup>८</sup>  
निर्वाणो देवता ।<sup>९</sup> निष्कुलप्रवृत्तिः ।<sup>१०</sup> निष्केवलज्ञानम् ।<sup>११</sup> ॥१-११॥

atha nirvāṇopaniṣadam vyākhyāsyāmaḥ /<sup>1</sup> paramahaṃsaḥ so'ham /<sup>2</sup>  
parivrājakāḥ paścimaliṅgāḥ /<sup>3</sup> manmatha kṣetrapālāḥ /<sup>4</sup> gaganasiddhāntaḥ /<sup>5</sup>  
amṛtakallolanadī /<sup>6</sup> akṣayaṃ nirañjanam /<sup>7</sup> niḥsaṃśaya ṛṣiḥ /<sup>8</sup> nirvāṇo-  
devatā /<sup>9</sup> niṣkulapravṛttiḥ /<sup>10</sup> niṣkevalajñānam //<sup>11</sup> (1-11).

Now the Upanishad named ‘Nirvano-panishad/Nirvana Upanishad’ is being described here (1).

‘I am a ‘Paramhansa’ (i.e. a seeker or aspirant of the highest order who is most enlightened and wise; a truly realised individual). I am that (Brahm) [That is, I have become enlightened enough to realise that my true identity is the Brahm]’ (2).

Renunciates called ‘Parivrajak’ (another word for a Sanyasi) are marked by symbols indicative of the last stage of life of total and sincere detachment from this world in preparation for the final exit from this temporal, mundane, mortal and artificial world. But these symbols are not present in the seeker/aspirant who is called ‘paścimaliṅgāḥ’ (see note below) (3).

They (Paramhansas and Parivrajaks) are like the guardians with the mandate to check ‘Kamdeo/cupid’ who is called ‘Manmath’. The latter is the patron God of yearnings, longings, lust, passions, desire, amorous tendencies etc. Here it means that these seekers or aspirants can overcome these traits which are inherent and natural tendencies of ordinary worldly creatures and are, by nature, present in their mind and heart as their integral part. [That is why cupid is called ‘Manmath’— one who lives in the mind and heart of the creature and churns it, keeps it restless and agitated.] (4).

They follow the principle of the sky— i.e. they are without any attachments of any kind, have a fathomless depth of thought and reasoning, vastness and broadness of perspective of things around them (5).

They are like a river of ‘Amrit’ (elixir of eternity and bliss) which has swift currents. [A ‘river with swift currents’ indicates that all the good virtues are swelling in their heart, the water symbolising all the noble virtues is full to the brim, it is clear and in abundance. A swiftly flowing river has clean water as opposed to a stagnant and slow flowing river, a river that is turbid and murky, sluggish in its flow and whose water has dried up or become slushy. Such a river is not considered pure and unpolluted.] (6).

Their (seeker’s or aspirant’s) form and nature is imperishable, eternal, faultless, holy and divine (7).

Their honoured teacher or moral preceptor (Rishi) is symbolised by ‘the absence of doubts, confusions, vexations and perplexities’ of all kind. [That is, they don’t have any doubt or confusion; they are fully convinced that what they know is the ultimate and correct Truth and Reality; they are wise, erudite, informed and enlightened.] (8).

‘Nirvana’ for them is their God; it is the aim of their spiritual endeavours. [To wit, Nirvana for enlightened ascetics is obtaining freedom from ignorance and delusions, because that means freedom from all entanglements, it means liberation and deliverance from the bondage of gross mundane existence, and this is tantamount to extinguishing of worldly desires and hopes—because it is this desire and hope from the world that ties the Atma, the soul of an ascetic to this mundane, gross and perishable world of material things, and by extension to the cycle of birth and death. They worship, adore, honour, and pointedly aim to achieve these qualities that make them live a life in a transcendental plane. When all worldly desires and hopes are eliminated, the ascetic is said to have found the highest level of ‘freedom’ from all bondages, he has found liberation and deliverance from all forms of grossness and entanglements that had hitherto bogged him down and obstructed his attainment of bliss, peace and happiness. He no longer has to get into the cesspool of miseries and sorrows, of troubles and tribulations, of grief and worries which are so characteristic of existence in the gross world. This is his ‘Nirvana’.] (9).

Their behaviour and demeanours transcends the barriers of class, creed, caste, and clan. [For them, all the creatures irrespective of their birth, vocation and colour etc. are equal. There is no one higher or lower, respectable or despicable for them. They have exemplary equanimity in their outlook. Their behaviour does not seem to conform to traditional patterns of behaviour followed by an ordinary person. But at the same time they have transcended such mundane consideration of adhering to established norms of behaviour and conduct because they see the world through the subtle eyes of the Atma and not through the gross eyes of the body.] (10).

They are aware of the ultimate truth and absolute reality which is one, the only one, and without any name, attributes, denominations, degrees, qualities, titles, honours and designations (11). [1-11]

[Note:- The word ‘paścimaliṅgāḥ’ in phrase no. 3 means those renunciates/ascetics/recluses who may not have any external marks of an ascetic or recluse such as carrying of a water pot or staff generally carried by a mendicant or wearing a tuft of hair on the head or wearing ochre clothes etc., but internally they possess all the qualities, attributes, virtues and characteristics of a true renunciate ascetic or recluse. They are recognised as a hidden or subtle image of Lord Vishnu who is apparently concealed in their bosom (heart) instead of being visible externally in the form of certain symbols or marks which characterise a ‘Sanyasi’. A Sanyasi is regarded as an image of Lord Vishnu par-se. Sanyas is the last and the fourth stage in the life of a man. A true ‘Sanyasi’ is different from a deceitful vagrant who falsely poses as a holy, pious and devout mendicant.]

ऊर्ध्वाम्नायाः १२ निरालम्बपीठः १३ संयोगदीक्षा १४ वियोगोपदेशः १५  
 दीक्षासंतोषपावनं च १६ द्वादशादित्यावलोकनम् १७ विवेकरक्षा १८ करुणैव  
 केलिः १९ आनन्दमाला २० एकान्तगुहायां मुक्तसनसुखगोष्ठी २१  
 अकल्पितभिक्षाशी २२ हंसाचारः २३ सर्वभूतान्तर्वर्ती हंस इति प्रतिपादनम् २४  
 ॥१२-२४॥

ūrdhvāmnāyāḥ /<sup>12</sup> nirālabhapīṭhaḥ /<sup>13</sup> saṁyogadīkṣā /<sup>14</sup> viyogopadeśaḥ /<sup>15</sup>  
 dīkṣāsantoṣapānaṁ ca /<sup>16</sup> dvādaśādityāvalokanam /<sup>17</sup> vivekarakṣā /<sup>18</sup>  
 karuṇaiva keliḥ /<sup>19</sup> ānandamālā /<sup>20</sup> ekāntaguhāyām  
 muktāsanasukhagoṣṭhī /<sup>21</sup> akalpitabhikṣāśī /<sup>22</sup>  
 haṁsācāraḥ /<sup>23</sup> sarvabhūtāntarvartī haṁsa iti prati-pādanam //<sup>24</sup> (12-24).

They practice and strive to attain the highest stature (12).

They do not have a permanent location and habitat or a place of residence (13).

To be with the Lord, to be one with the supreme, transcendental Being, is their only initiation and aim in life (14).

Their only teaching is to be detached from and remain dispassionate towards the world, to completely renounce it with sincerity, and to keep away from its allurements (15).

After being initiated (i.e. having chosen the path leading to oneness with God and having renounced the world completely), their only activity is to be contented and satisfied with whatever they have, or comes their way (16).

They visualise all the 12 Adityas (Suns) simultaneously. [These 12 mythological Suns rise together at the time of the dooms-day when the creation is being annihilated. Here it means that the Sanyasis can foresee death and extinction of existence right in front of their mental eyes. This prevents them from being indulgent in this materialistic and artificial world, for the simple reason that a person who sees death staring in his face, or who sees death as being imminent, would never get attracted to the sensual pleasures of the world. He would rather wish that he quickly finds deliverance from the horrors that 'dying' implies.] (17).

They protect themselves by their wisdom, erudition, truthful knowledge and enlightenment (18).

To show mercy and have compassion are their normal behavioural pattern and playful activity. [That is, they enjoy doing it.] (19).

Bliss, joy and happiness emanating from their heart is like a garland for them. [That is, these virtues are their ornamentation and they adorn them. They always are in cheerful and blissful state; they are always joyful and happy.] (20).

To sit quietly in a calm, serene, secluded and lonely place is like a meeting or community affair for them. [That is, they prefer solitude.] (21).

Uncertain food that is not prepared by them but received as alms or charity is their meal. [That is, they keep satisfied with whatever they get by begging in the form of food. Their meals are not certain; they do not know whether they will get them at all or not. That entails control of their taste buds and yearnings for delicious food. They eat only to sustain themselves, and not to appease their taste buds or gratify themselves.] (22).

Their behaviours and demeanours are like a Swan. [That is, they accept good things and forsake all that is considered bad even as a Swan is supposed to drink only milk and leave water aside; it also is famous for picking pearls from sundry other jewels.] (23).

Their firm belief, conviction and faith lies in the proclamation “that the Atma (the pure conscious soul, the spirit, the true ‘self’ of all living beings which is pure and untainted consciousness) which resides inside the bosom of all creatures is the symbolic ‘Swan’. [To wit, they understand and have firm belief in the principle that the Atma is pure, holy and wise like a symbolic Swan because the latter has the characteristic quality of picking up only good thinking and leaving behind bad things from whatever it is offered— i.e. just like the Swan, the Atma too is incorrupt, pure, wise, erudite, holy and divine in essence.] (24).

धैर्यकन्था ।<sup>२५</sup> उदासीनकौपीनम् ।<sup>२६</sup> विचारदण्डः ।<sup>२७</sup> ब्रह्मावलोकयोगपट्टः ।<sup>२८</sup>

श्रियां पादुका ।<sup>२९</sup> परेच्छाचरणम् ।<sup>३०</sup> कुण्डलिनीबन्धः ।<sup>३१</sup>

परापवादमुक्तो जीवन्मुक्तः ।<sup>३२</sup> शिवयोगनिद्रा च खेचरीमुद्रा च परमानन्दी ।<sup>३३</sup>

निर्गुणगुणत्रयम् ।<sup>३४</sup> विवेकलभ्यम् ।<sup>३५</sup> मनोवागगोचरम् ।<sup>३६</sup>

अनित्यं जगद्यज्जनितं स्वप्नजगदभ्रगजादितुल्यम् ।<sup>३७</sup>

तथा देहादिसंघातं मोहगुणजालकलितं तद्रज्जुसर्पवत्कल्पितम् ।<sup>३८</sup>

विष्णुविध्यादिशताभिधानलक्ष्यम् ।<sup>३९</sup> अङ्कुशो मार्गः शून्यं न संकेत ।<sup>४०</sup>

परमेश्वरसत्ता ।<sup>४१</sup> सत्यसिद्धयोगो मठः ।<sup>४२</sup> अमरपदं न तत्स्वरूपम् ।<sup>४३</sup>

आदिब्रह्मस्वसंवित् ।<sup>४४</sup> अजपा गायत्री ।<sup>४५</sup> विकारदण्डो ध्येयः ।<sup>४६</sup> ॥२५—४६॥

dhairyakanthā /<sup>25</sup> udāsīnakaupīnam /<sup>26</sup> vicāraṇḍaḥ /<sup>27</sup>  
 brahmāvalokayoga-paṭṭaḥ /<sup>28</sup> śrīyām pādukā /<sup>29</sup> parecchācaraṇam /<sup>30</sup>  
 kuṇḍalinī bandhaḥ /<sup>31</sup> parāpavādamukto jīvanmuktaḥ /<sup>32</sup>  
 śivayoganidrā ca khecarīmudrā ca paramānandī /<sup>33</sup> nirguṇaguṇatrayam /<sup>34</sup>  
 vivekalabhyaṃ /<sup>35</sup> manovāga-gocaram /<sup>36</sup>  
 anityaṃ jagadyajjanitaṃ svapnajaḡadabhragaḡāditulyam /<sup>37</sup>  
 tathā dehādisaṅghātaṃ mohaguṇaḡālakalitaṃ tadraḡjusarpavatkalpitaṃ /<sup>38</sup>  
 viṣṇuvidhyādiśatābhidhānalakṣyam /<sup>39</sup>  
 aṅkuśo mārḡgaḥ śūnyaṃ na saṅketaḥ<sup>40</sup> parameśvarasattā /<sup>41</sup>  
 satyasiddhayogo maṭhaḥ /<sup>42</sup> amarapadaṃ tatsvarūpam /<sup>43</sup>  
 ādibrahmasvasaṃvit /<sup>44</sup> ajapā gāyatrī /<sup>45</sup> vikāraṇḍo dhyeyaḥ //<sup>46</sup>  
 (25-46).

The virtues of having patience, forbearance and fortitude are like a ‘Kantha’ for a Sanyasi. [The ‘Kantha’ is a simple and unpretentious quilt or an overcoat stitched from tattered rags. It implies that like a hermit or sage who covers himself with simple clothes that sets him apart from the rest of the people because it proves he is not attracted to things that have only superficial value like wearing costly garments just to cover the body, a true Sanyasi understands that his true value lies in the eclectic qualities of patience, forbearance and fortitude that he possesses. He observes these virtues as a characteristic feature of his overall personality. Like the overcoat or the robe of an ascetic that shields him from the vagaries of Nature, a true Sanyasi uses these qualities to protect himself from being disturbed and his internal peace and blissfulness being compromised by any external factor that may cause agitation and uneasiness to him.] (25).

The tendency to be indifferent towards this artificial and materialistic mundane world is their ‘loin cloth’ (26).

Righteous and judicious thoughts are their ‘stick’ (staff, rod, sceptre) (27); constant sight which is focused on the supreme Brahm is their ‘ascetic’s robe’ (28); riches, wealth and prosperity is like a ‘foot-wear’ for them (i.e. they don’t give these things any value or pay attention to the worldly riches. Rather, they treat the world’s comforts with contempt) (29).

They keep their body not because they wish to possess it but because it is the desire of the supreme Lord that they do so (30).

A closed Kundalini<sup>1</sup> is the fetter that shackles them to this body (i.e. they endeavour to open the closed Kundalini and unleash the divine energy trapped inside it) (31).

They are free from the worldly tendency to find fault with others and criticise them. They are deemed to be liberated and delivered from the bondages that tie an ordinary man to this humdrum world of artificiality even though they live in this temporal world like an ordinary man (32).

To be 'one' with the auspicious Lord is their 'sleep'. Both during this kind of symbolic sleep as well as in the Yogic posture called 'Khechari Mudra'<sup>2</sup>, they experience supreme and eternal bliss (33).

They are beyond the reach and purview of the so-called 'Trigun'<sup>3</sup> (i.e. they are not affected by any of the three basic characteristics that drive the behaviour of an individual in this world; they are neutral and transcend these three qualities) (34).

Now Brahm is being referred to here—He (Brahm) can be realised by wisdom and discrimination (35); he is not accessible by, or is a subject matter of, either the speech or the mind (i.e. by debates, scholarship, expertise in scriptures etc.) (36).

This world is mortal, transient, artificial and illusionary. Those who are created (born) here are like the world in a dream, or are like the figures of elephants etc. formed by the ever changing shapes of the clouds in the sky (37).

This body and its company (i.e. the various sense organs, the kith and kin of a person) are all tarnished by the faults or flaws such as 'Moha' (attractions, infatuations, attachments, delusions, ignorance, misconceptions). The entire world, with its accoutrements, is as erroneous and misleading a conception as of imagining a snake being present in a length of a rope (38).

Brahm with hundreds of names such as Vishnu, Brahma etc. is the ultimate target (aim) to strive for by a creature (39).

The way to attain Brahm is to keep control over the sense organs of the body (i.e. exercise self-restraint). The path to Brahm is not without a direction (i.e. there are well laid down guidelines to realise Brahm, and it is not a blind alley) (40).

The supreme, transcendental Lord is the ultimate authority (41).

The truthful and accomplished Yoga (here meaning austerity, penances, hardship and stern vows directed to achieve success in realising and attaining Brahm, contemplation and meditation upon him, diligence and sincere endeavours to realise him) is like an abbey or monastery for a Yogi (ascetic) (42).

'Amar Pad' (the state of being immortal and eternal) is not the truthful and essential form of Brahm<sup>4</sup> (43).



True ‘Gyan’ (enlightenment, wisdom and knowledge) is the awareness (or being conscious) of the fact that ‘Brahm’, who was present in the beginning, and the ‘Self’ (i.e. the Atma of the Sanyasi or ascetic) are the one and the same (44).

Constant remembrance of this fact is akin to the constant repetition of the famous Gayatri Mantra<sup>5</sup> (45).

The targeted aim is to overcome all types of flaws, faults and blemishes that mire the individual and shackles him to this world (46) [25-46].

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>Kundalini— the word means ‘coil like’. According to Yoga philosophy, the subtle energy centre of the body is in a spiral form located at the base of the spine. Its energy is trapped unless the spinal cord’s central thread called ‘Shushma’, which is blocked at the lower end under normal circumstances, is unclogged by Yoga. When this happens, the spiritual energy trapped inside the Kundalini snakes up this nerve and rises up into the head, leading to immense self bliss of a spiritual dimension.

<sup>2</sup>Khechari Mudra—This is also a Yogic posture. In this, the tongue is inverted and tucked in the inside of the palate, pointing inwards. The eyes are closed and the iris is focused at a point midway between the eyebrows. This posture is said to free one from hunger, thirst, sleep, fatigue etc..

<sup>3</sup>The Triguna present in a creature are the basic qualities that are inherently present in all living beings, and an aggregate of these three qualities determines the personality and character of all the creatures. These three Gunas or the “Triguna” are the following— (i) ‘Sata’— which is considered as the best quality leading to noble thoughts and acts, (ii) ‘Raja’— this is the medium quality leading to worldly passions, and (iii) ‘Tama’— this the meanest of the three qualities producing evil tendencies.

<sup>4</sup>By saying that ‘Amar Pad’ or an immortal state is not the same as the Brahm, the sage means that the ultimate aim of the soul is to merge itself with the cosmic Soul and stop yearning for immortality as a separate form of existence like those of so many Gods. To be ‘one with Brahm’ is a state when the individual soul’s independent existence is exhausted by its merger with the supreme Soul of creation. This is the ultimate form of liberation and deliverance, called salvation and emancipation of the creature. Since this is a unique state of blessedness and beatitude, a state that has no equal and parallel to it, it is called ‘Kaivalya’— meaning ‘one of its kind’.

This Kaivalya form of Mukti is sought by a Sanyasi as it helps him to merge his ‘self’ with the supreme ‘Self’ that is known as ‘Brahm’. Those who wish to have the ‘Kaivalya’ form of Mukti are the ones who believe in the philosophy of ‘Advaita’ or non-duality. They see the same Brahm, the same Atma, the same pure consciousness as being present everywhere in this creation. This helps the Sanyasi to overcome countless problems that give rise to dichotomy and strife, to ill-will and jealousy, to agitations and loss of peace and happiness. Sure enough this state grants eternal bliss, joy, beatitude and felicity.

In short, this final plunging of the individual soul with the cosmic Soul is called ‘Kaivalya’ form of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation.

<sup>5</sup>The famous Gayatri Mantra is ‘OM BHUBHUVAH SWAHA TATSAVITURVARENYAM BHARGO DEVASYA DHIMAHI DHIYO YONAH PRACODAYAT’ (Rig Veda 3/62/10; Sam Veda 1462; Yajur Veda 3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/3) (The meaning of the Gayatri Mantra in full is as follows— ‘OM salutation! OM is the supreme, transcendental Brahm. He is the Lord of the earth, the sky and the heavens. That Brahm is luminous like the Sun. He is the best, most excellent, most exalted divine entity who is a destroyer of sins. May he inspire, infuse and propel our intellect with wisdom, erudition and enlightenment so that we are purified and move on the righteous path, have noble thoughts, and follow noble deeds.’]

मनोनिरोधिनी कन्था ।<sup>४७</sup> योगेन सदानन्दस्वरूपदर्शनम् ।<sup>४८</sup> आनन्दभिक्षाशी ।<sup>४९</sup>  
 महाश्मशानेऽप्यानन्दवने वासः ।<sup>५०</sup> एकान्तस्थानम् ।<sup>५१</sup> आनन्दमठम् ।<sup>५२</sup>  
 उन्मन्यवस्था ।<sup>५३</sup> शारदा चेष्टा ।<sup>५४</sup> उन्मनी गतिः ।<sup>५५</sup> निर्मलगात्रम् ।<sup>५६</sup>  
 निरालम्बपीठम् ।<sup>५७</sup> अमृतकल्लोलानन्दक्रिया ।<sup>५८</sup> पाण्डरगगनमहासिद्धान्तः ।<sup>५९</sup>  
 शमदमादिदिव्यशक्त्याचरणे क्षेत्रपात्रपटुता ।<sup>६०</sup> परावरसंयोगः ।<sup>६१</sup>  
 तारकोपदेशः ।<sup>६२</sup> अद्वैतसदानन्दो देवता ।<sup>६३</sup> ॥४७—६३॥

manonirodhinī kanthā /<sup>47</sup> yogena sadānandasvarūpadarśanam /<sup>48</sup>  
 ānandabhikṣāśī /<sup>49</sup> mahāśmaśāne’pyānandavane vāsaḥ /<sup>50</sup>  
 ekāntasthānam /<sup>51</sup> ānandamaṭham /<sup>52</sup> unmanyavasthā /<sup>53</sup> śāradā ceṣṭā /<sup>54</sup>  
 unmanī gatiḥ /<sup>55</sup> nirmalagātram /<sup>56</sup> nirālambapīṭham /<sup>57</sup>  
 amṛtakallolānandakriyā /<sup>58</sup> pāṇḍara-gaganam / mahāsiddhāntaḥ /<sup>59</sup>  
 śamadamādidivyaśaktyācaraṇe kṣetrapātrapatutā /<sup>60</sup> parāvarasaṃyogaḥ /<sup>61</sup>  
 tārakopadeśaḥ /<sup>62</sup> advaitasadānando devatā //<sup>63</sup> (47-63).

Self control or self restraint (or leashing) of the wayward, restless and reckless nature of the mind, which is in a constant state of flux, is like a quilt or a mattress for a Sanyasi (a renunciate) or an ascetic (47).

They remain ever engrossed in meditation and constantly have a divine and subtle view of the eternally blissful Brahm (48).

Bliss, joy, ecstasy and happiness are like staple food for them (49).

They reside in a cemetery or a cremation ground with the same pleasure and ease that they get from residing in a forest of joy called ‘Anand Van’ (50).

Serene, calm, secluded and lonely places are their monasteries or abbeys (51-52).

They remain certain, steadfast, unwavering, free from all doubts and confusions (53).

Their efforts and demeanours are a source of illumination and inspiration for others (54).

Their fate is certain and pre-determined (55).

Their body is sinless, holy and free from all the tainting effects which generally affect a gross body of an ordinary creature (56).

They have no permanent seat or abode (i.e. they remain free from any attachment to a place) (57).

To remain active in the currents of joys and bliss in an ocean of Amrit (symbolising the elixir of eternity as well as of eternal bliss) is their normal activity (58).

Their great philosophy is the example of the vast space or sky which is all-encompassing and fathomless. [The sky or deep space is the subtlest of the five basic elements constituting the cosmos; the word sky or space symbolises Brahm by its vastness, omnipresence, the qualities of being non-attached to anything inspite of being all-encompassing, all-pervasive and all-permeating, and of being emptiness as well as of being fullness.] (59).

They are very diligent and experts in the practice of such excellent qualities as 'Sham and Dam' (equality, forbearance, fortitude, tolerance and self-restraint) depending upon the place, time, circumstance and people (60).

To be one with the supreme, transcendental entity (Brahm), and endeavour to accomplish this ultimate oneness with the supreme reality (61), is what they preach and practice for the final deliverance of the soul from this world and its liberation from the shackles that tie it to the latter. [This is the principle tenet that they preach; they also practice it themselves.] (62).

Their God is the Advaita concept of the non-dual Brahm which is nothing but pure Consciousness that is characterised by being eternally blissful, and as being a personification of beatitude and felicity of the highest kind (63). [47-63].

नियमः स्वान्तरिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ॥६४॥ भयमोहशोकक्रोधत्यागस्त्यागः ॥६५॥

परावरैक्यरसास्वादनम् ॥६६॥ अनियामकत्वनिर्मलशक्तिः ॥६७॥ स्वप्रकाशब्रह्मतत्त्वे

शिवशक्तिसंपुटितप्रपञ्चच्छेदनम् ।<sup>६८</sup> तथा पत्राक्षाक्षिकमण्डलभावाभावदहनम् ।<sup>६९</sup>  
 बिभ्रज्याकाशाधारम् ।<sup>७०</sup> शिवं तुरीयं यज्ञोपवीतम् ।<sup>७१</sup> तन्मया शिखा ।<sup>७२</sup>  
 चिन्मयं चोत्सृष्टिरण्डम् संततोक्षिकमण्डलम् ।<sup>७३</sup> कर्मनिर्मूलनं कथा ।<sup>७४</sup>  
 मायाममताहंकारदहनम् ।<sup>७५</sup> श्मशाने अनाहताङ्गी ।<sup>७६</sup>  
 निस्त्रैगुण्यस्वरूपानुसन्धानं समयं भ्रान्तिहननम् ।<sup>७७</sup> कामादिवृत्तिदहनम् ।<sup>७८</sup>  
 काठिन्यदृढकौपीनम् ।<sup>७९</sup> चिराजिनवासः ।<sup>८०</sup> अनाहतमन्त्रं अक्रिययैव जुष्टम् ।<sup>८१</sup>  
 स्वेच्छाचारस्वस्वभावो मोक्षः ।<sup>८२</sup> परं ब्रह्म प्लववदाचरणम् ।<sup>८३</sup>  
 ब्रह्मचर्यशान्तिसंग्रहणम् ।<sup>८४</sup> ब्रह्मचर्याश्रमेऽधीत्य वानप्रस्थाश्रमेऽधीत्य स  
 सर्वसंविन्यासं संन्यासम् ।<sup>८५</sup> अन्ते ब्रह्माखण्डाकारम् ।<sup>८६</sup>  
 नित्यं सर्वसंदेहनाशनम् ।<sup>८७</sup> ॥६४—८७॥

एतन्निर्वाणदर्शनं शिष्यं पुत्रं विना न देयमित्युपनिषद् ॥८८॥

niyamaḥ svāntarindriyanigrahaḥ /<sup>64</sup> bhayamohaśokakrodhatyāgastyāgaḥ /<sup>65</sup>  
 parāvaraikyarasāsāsvādanam /<sup>66</sup> aniyāmakatvanirmalaśaktiḥ /<sup>67</sup>  
 svaprakāśa-brahmatattve śivaśaktisamputītaprapañcacchedanam /<sup>68</sup>  
 tathā patrākṣāṣika-maṇḍaluḥ / bhāvābhāvadahanam /<sup>69</sup>  
 bibhratyākāśādhāram /<sup>70</sup>  
 śivaṃ turīyaṃ yajñopavītam /<sup>71</sup> tanmayā śikhā /<sup>72</sup>  
 cinmayam cotsrṣṭidaṇḍam / santatākṣika-maṇḍalum /<sup>73</sup>  
 karmanirmūlanam kanthā /<sup>74</sup> māmāmatāhaṅkāradahanam /<sup>75</sup>  
 śmaśāne anāhatāṅgī /<sup>76</sup> nistraiguṇyasvarūpānusandhānam samayam /  
 bhrāntiharaṇam /<sup>77</sup> kāmādivṛttidahanam /<sup>78</sup> kāṭhinyadrḍhakaupīnam /<sup>79</sup>  
 cīrājinaśāḥ /<sup>80</sup> anāhatamantraḥ / akriyayaiva juṣṭam /<sup>81</sup>  
 svecchācārasva-svabhāvo mokṣaḥ<sup>82</sup> paraṃ brahma / plavavadācaraṇam /<sup>83</sup>  
 brahmacaryaśānti-saṅgrahaṇam /<sup>84</sup>  
 brahmacaryāśrame'dhītya sa sarvasaṃvinnyāsaṃ saṃnyāsaṃ /<sup>85</sup>  
 ante brahmā-khaṇḍākāram /<sup>86</sup> nityaṃ sarvasandehanāśanam //<sup>87</sup>

etannirvāṇadarśanam śiṣyaṃ putraṃ vinā na deyamityupaniṣat /<sup>88</sup> (64-88).

To exercise control or restraint over their sense organs is the rule that renunciate ascetics follow (64).

To abandon fear, consternations, all types of attachments and endearments, sorrows and grief as well as anger and wrath, is their true renunciation (65).

They enjoy the divine taste of being (feeling) one with the supreme, transcendental Brahm (66).

Their stupendous, potent, powerful but subtle strength lies in the fact that they neither attempt to exert control over anyone (i.e. they don't try to lord over others or forcefully exert or thrust their authority upon anyone like a master or a senior, they do not coerce others) nor treat anyone with contempt or disdain (i.e. they show respect to everyone and honour their dignity, self respect and independence) (67).

They destroy (i.e. get rid of) this illusionary, misleading and entrapping but apparently real-looking, majestic and fascinating world, which is actually hollow like a cavity or an empty pot but cupped (enclosed, surrounded) and punctuated (infiltrated, impregnated) on all the sides by 'Shiva and Shakti'<sup>1</sup> with the help of the awareness and knowledge of the self-illuminated, self-evident essential and ultimate truth called Brahm.

[To wit, with the light of truthful knowledge of Brahm with erudition and wisdom, with judicious discrimination and application of rational thinking and logic, they are able to destroy the darkness represented by the cavity, pit or hollow which is covered on all the sides by the veil or curtain of delusions and ignorance. The pot or the cavity here symbolises the hollowness of the world, the darkness represents the ignorance of the creature, the emptiness of the pot or the cavity represents the faulty nature or vanity of this world, and the self-illuminated essence symbolises the supreme Brahm. The 'Shiva and Shakti' are a metaphor for the male and female aspects of nature which symbolises passions and the subtle intention to carry forward the process of procreation. The 'Sanyasi' is able to see the presence of the divine Brahm in the entire creative process of Nature. That is, he sees Brahm and not lust and passions in this process.] (68).

They (renunciate ascetics or the Sanyasis) have accomplished the complete annihilation or burning of all their emotions and feelings pertaining to the presence or the absence of the three types of bodies of a creature—viz. the causal body, the subtle body and the gross body. [That is, they are not affected either by the sensory perceptions and feelings of the gross body consisting of the five sense organs and five organs of action<sup>2</sup>, by the restlessness and agitation caused by the subtle body consisting of the mind, which is constantly in a state of flux, and the intellect which tries hard to think, rein in and guide the other two bodies of the creature, or the casual body which traps the various 'Vasanas' (inherent desires of the creature; passions for the sense objects of the world; lust to derive comfort and pleasure from them) and 'Vrittis'

(inherent tendencies and inclinations of all living beings). In short, such persons are aloof and independent of these bodies because they have realised that their 'True self' is the Atma and not these three bodies.] (69).

They wear the sky. [That is, they consider themselves as vast and limitless as the sky, and therefore, their attire is the sky itself. They do not need any other cloth over their body. They cover themselves with the sky] (70).

The presence of Shiva (symbolising the supreme truth and bliss) in the 4<sup>th</sup> state of existence called the 'Turiya state'<sup>3</sup> is like the sacred thread for them (71).

Shiva's counterpart 'Maya', meaning supreme cosmic energy having stupendous potential and powers which was responsible for this creation, is the symbolic tuft of coiled hairs called 'Shikha' on their head. [That is, the head glows with a radiant, divine halo effusing from their bodies. This 'Shikha' acts like an antenna to catch and harness the immeasurable source of cosmic energy surrounding them. The 'Shikha' helps to concentrate this divine energy in them.] (72).

Being wise, enlightened and realised, the entire animate as well as the inanimate creation is nothing but a manifestation or revelation of the supreme, omnipresent, immanent Brahm for them (73).

Their preaching/discourse is not to be tied down by one's deeds and actions (i.e. not to be unduly bothered about the deeds and the fruits of any action). This means, inter-alia, the deeds should be done with a sense of total detachment and selflessness, not with a particular benefit or reward in sight. The deeds should not be done with any vested interest in mind (74).

To burn their 'Maya' (delusion, ignorance, hallucination, misconception), 'Mamta' (endearments, attachments and attractions) and 'Ahankar' (ego, pride, haughtiness, arrogance) (75), they roam about in cemeteries or cremation grounds like a vagabond and a carefree mendicant (76).

Those who are beyond the purview and reach of the three 'Gunas' (basic qualities inherent in a creature—Sata, Raja and Tama; see note to verse no. 25-36 above), those who spend their time in contemplating and meditating on the essence and true form and nature of the pure-self, those who try to diligently eliminate or get rid of delusions, misconceptions and falsehood of all kinds (77), those who continuously burn (annihilate or vanquish) Kaam (lust, passion, desires etc.) and other such 'Vrittis' (inherent tendencies of the creature) (78), those who wear the loin cloth and rigidly follow the principles of continence and self-restraint (79), those who wear deer-skin as garment for a prolonged time (80), those who enjoy the subtle cosmic sound of music or divine resonance called the 'Naad' which manifests itself in the divine word (Mantra) OM even when anyone is apparently not chanting it (81), those who roam/wander freely

without any attachments of any kind and go wherever they wish— these attributes of an ascetic or Sanyasi are akin to their being liberated and freed from a set pattern of worldly behaviours which tantamount to bondages for them (82).

Those ascetics or Sanyasis who aim for the supreme, transcendental Brahm, use the ‘boat’ of truthful knowledge, wisdom and erudition to reach that supreme entity (83).

To begin with, they attain peace and tranquillity by observing celibacy and continence—a process called observance of the vows of Brahmacharya (84).

When they enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of life and adopt the vows of Vaanprastha (i.e. renounce their worldly attachments and links with the household, handover their responsibilities to their kith and kin, and head for the forest), they continue with the process of ‘studying’, i.e. thinking, contemplating, meditating, concentrating and always focusing their attention towards the realisation of the supreme truth which is their pure-self as well as Brahm, a process that was more formal and limited to studying of the scriptures during the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life called ‘Brahmacharya’ that they had adopted earlier on in life before entering the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called the householder or ‘Grihastha’ phase, but which has now been broadened to include the actual aim of such scriptural studies, which is the attainment of freedom for the soul from all delusions and ignorance, and leading it to the path of truth and enlightenment, a path that culminates in the supreme, transcendental Brahm (85).

When ultimately they achieve the pinnacle of truthful knowledge called enlightenment which is synonymous with self-realisation, they forsake all other knowledge pertaining to this artificial world, and instead they retain only the truthful knowledge pertaining to Brahm and the pure-self or Atma. When this is achieved or accomplished, it is a truthful and honest form of ‘Sanyas’ (renunciation, detachment and total abandonment of worldly ties and desires) (86).

At last, such an ascetic or Sanyasi reaches the stage of being one like the eternal, continues, uninterrupted and un-fractured Brahm. Then he is able to destroy all his doubts and confusions, and overcome all perplexities and vexations (i.e. such an ascetic becomes an image of the supreme, unambiguous and truthful Brahm) (87) [64-87].

This is the essential philosophy of Nirvana (liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation) as enumerated, enunciated and extolled in this Upanishad. Its principles should not be taught to anyone other than a devoted disciple or a son who is eligible to be taught as he is found devoted and committed to the profound spiritual tenets as preached in this Upanishad (61).

[Note:- <sup>1</sup>‘Shiva’ represents the absolute Truth which is irrefutable and beautiful, and therefore Shiva also stands for the pure cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. ‘Shakti’ represents the dynamism of the pure Consciousness; the cosmic forces that are responsible for unfolding, spreading, controlling and bringing to an end this creation.

Brahm and Shakti go together just like sun and its rays go together. The value of the sun lies in its rays, and the rays have existence due to the sun.

There is another connotation to this phrase “Shiva-Shakti”. It refers to the fact that the Atma allows its own self to be encircled by Maya or delusions just like the sun allows its own self to be surrounded by its rays. So long as the Atma is surrounded by Maya, it cannot see the truth of the world; and as soon as the Atma overcomes the Maya it can clearly see beyond. In short, the world consists of both the absolute truth factor in the form of Brahm, as well as the deluding aspect in the form of Maya. They are like the two opposite poles of a magnet.

<sup>2</sup>The 5 organs of perception are the nose, ears, tongue, eyes and skin. The 5 organs of actions are— hands, legs, mouth, excretory organs and genitals.

<sup>3</sup>The 4 states of existence of the creature—(i) the waking that is known as the “Jagrat”, (ii) the dream state that is known as “Swapna”, (iii) the deep sleep state that is known as “Sushupta”, and (iv) the post-Sushupta state of transcendental existence that is known as “Turiya state of consciousness”.]

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‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him’ (Bible, Epistle of John, 1/2/15).

‘He who has become liberated in this life gains liberation in death, and he is eternally united with Brahm, the absolute reality. Such a seer will never be reborn.’ ‘The knower of the Atma (pure consciousness) does not identify himself with the body; he rests within it as if within a carriage. If people provide him with comforts and luxuries, he enjoys them and plays with them like a child. He bears no outward mark of a holy man. He remains quite unattached to the things of this world.’ —Adi Shankaracharya

‘From appearance lead me to reality, from darkness lead me to light, from death lead me to immortality’ (Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 1/3/28).

‘A religious man is guided in his activity not by the consequences of his action, but by the consciousness of the destination of his life.’—Leo Tolstoy

‘A man’s private thought can never be a lie; what he thinks is to him the truth, always.’—Mark Twain



‘When the road ends and the goal is gained, the pilgrim finds that he has travelled only from himself to himself.’— An ancient saying.

‘I have no scruple of change, nor fear of death/Nor was I ever born/Nor had I parents. I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute/I am That, I am That.

I cause no misery, nor am I miserable/I have no enemy/ nor am I enemy/I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute/I am That, I am That.

I am without form, without limit/Beyond space, beyond time/I am in everything, everything is in me/I am the bliss of the universe/Everywhere am I/I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute/I am That, I am That.

I am without body or change of the body/I am neither senses, nor object of the senses/I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute/I am That, I am That.

I am neither sin, nor virtue/nor temple, nor worship/nor pilgrimage, nor books/I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute/I am That, I am That.’ — Swami Ram Tirtha

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## ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

### Chapter 2: Sanyas Upanishads of the Sam Veda

There are five Upanishads belonging to the Sam Veda tradition that deal with the theme of Sanyas. They are all included in this Chapter, and are the following:

- 2.1 Aaruni/Aaruniko-panishad
- 2.2 Maitraayana-panishad
- 2.3 Maitrey-panishad
- 2.4 Sanyas-Upanishad
- 2.5 Kundiko-panishad

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#### 2.1 Aaruni/Aaruniko-panishad:

This is a short Upanishad describing briefly the process of becoming a 'Sanyasi', or a renunciate mendicant or an ascetic who has completely detached himself from the world and concentrates his attention on the supreme Brahman, the cosmic manifestation of pure Consciousness. It also outlines the vows that are to be observed by such a person and the rules that he has to strictly adhere to. This Upanishad should be read along with 'Sanyaso-panishad', Chapter no. 2.4, and 'Kundiko-panishad', Chapter no. 2.5 of this volume.

ॐ आरुणिः प्रजापतेर्लोकं जगाम । तं गत्वोवाच । केन भगवन्कर्माण्यशेषतो  
विसृजानीति । तं होवाच प्रजापतिस्तव पुत्रान्भ्रातृन्बन्ध्वादीञ्छिखां यज्ञोपवीतं यागं सूत्रं  
स्वाध्यायं च भूलोकभुवर्लोकस्वर्लोकमहर्लोकजनोलोकतपोलोकसत्यलोकं  
चातलतलातलवितलसुतल— रसातलमहातलपातालं ब्रह्माण्डं च विसृजेत् ।  
दण्डमाच्छादनं चैव कौपीनं च परिग्रहेत् । शेषं विसृजेदिति ॥१॥

om āruṇiḥ prajāpatyaḥ prajāpaterlokaṁ jagāma / taṁ gatvovāca / kena  
bhagavankarmāṇyaśeṣato visrjānīti / taṁ hovāca prajāpatistava putrān-

bhrātṛṇbandhvādīñchikhāṃ yajñopavītaṃ yāgaṃ sūtraṃ svādhyāyaṃ  
bhūrlōkabhuvarlōkasvarlōkamaharlōkajanolokatapolokasatyalōkaṃ cātalata-  
lātalavitalasutalarasātalamahātalapātālaṃ brahmāṇḍaṃ ca visṛjet /  
daṇḍamācchādanaṃ caiva kaupīnaṃ ca parigrahet / śeṣaṃ visṛjediti // 1 //

Om salutations! Aaruni, the son of Arun, who used to worship Prajapati Brahma (the Creator), appeared before him in his abode called Brahma Loka and asked, ‘Oh Lord! How can I forsake or abandon all deeds (i.e., how can I abstain from getting myself involved in doing deeds in this world where I have to live, and where without doing deeds of one or the other kind, life is impossible)’.

Brahma replied, ‘Oh sage! One should leave aside all attachments for and attractions to the materialistic world and its artificial objects. He should become dispassionate towards all— such as, a son, all his kith and kin as well as relatives, friends and compatriots; he should not give undue importance to wearing a sacred thread, doing ‘Yagya’ (fire sacrifices), possessing a tuft of hair on the head (known as ‘Shikha’) and the self study of scriptures. At the same time, he should forsake the entire universe consisting of the 7 upper worlds—such as ‘Bhu’, ‘Bhuvaha’, ‘Swaha’, ‘Maha’, ‘Janaha’, ‘Tapaha’ and ‘Satya Loka’, as well as the 7 nether worlds—such as ‘Atal’, ‘Taltal’, ‘Vital’, ‘Sutal’, ‘Rasatal’, ‘Mahatal’ and ‘Patal’. [That is, he should remain indifferent to whatever is happening around him, should be completely detached and dispassionate towards them.]

A true Sanyasi who has truly renounced all the attractions and attachments of the gross material world, as well as of his own gross body and its sense organs, should carry only three things befitting his exalted stature—such as a staff or a stick (known as a Danda), a simple piece of cloth to cover his body, and a loin cloth to cover his private parts. All the rest of his possessions should be dispensed with or voluntarily discarded by him (1).

गृहस्थो ब्रह्मचारी वा वानप्रस्थो वा उपवीतं भूमावप्सु वा विसृजेत् ।  
अलौकिकाग्नीनुदराग्नौ समारोपयेत् । गायत्रीं च स्ववाच्यग्नौ समारोपयेत् । कुटीचरो  
ब्रह्मचारी कुटुम्बं विसृजेत् । पात्रं विसृजेत् । पवित्रं विसृजेत् । दण्डाँल्लोकाग्नीन्  
विसृजेदिति होवाच । अत ऊर्ध्वममन्त्रवदाचरेत् । ऊर्ध्वगमनं विसृजेत् ।  
औषधवदशनमाचरेत् । त्रिसंख्यादौ स्नानमाचरेत् । संधि  
समाधावात्मन्याचरेत् । सर्वेषु वेदेष्वारण्यकमावर्तयेदुपनिषदमावर्तयेदुपनिषदमावर्तयेदिति  
॥२॥

gr̥hastho brahmacārī vā vānaprastho vā upavītaṃ bhūmāvapsu vā visṛjet /  
alaukikāgnīnudarāgnau samāropayet / gāyatrīm ca svavācyagnau  
samāropayet / kuṭīcaro brahmacārī kuṭumbaṃ visṛjet / pātraṃ visṛjet /  
pavitraṃ visṛjet / daṇḍāmlōkāgnīn visṛjediti hovāca / ata ūrdhvamamantra-  
vadācaret / ūrdhvagamanam visṛjet / auśadhavadaśanamācaret /

trisaṇḍhyāḍau snānamācāret / saṁdhiṁ samādhāvātmanyācāret / sarveṣu  
vedeṣvāraṇyakamāvartayedupaniṣadamāvartayedupaniṣadamāvartayediti // 2  
//

Whether a person is a ‘Brahmachari’ (a celibate; a person passing through the first phase of life), a ‘Grihastha’ (a householder; a person passing through the second phase of life), or a ‘Vaanprastha’ (a person in the third phase of life when he is expected to distance himself from active life in his household affairs, and instead focus on going to pilgrimage or to some serene place in the forest away from the hustle and bustle of a busy world), when he decides to sincerely renounce all his attachments with the world, he should symbolically transfer all the divine fires, which he is supposed to worship while he was in his household days as per edicts and prescriptions of the scriptures for their specific ‘Ashrams’ (periods of life), into his abdomen or stomach, and merge these fires with the divine and glorious eternal fire of life burning inside him. [The eternal fire that keeps the body working and helps the food to get digested, keeping the body warm and nourished and the spark of life ignited inside it, is called ‘Jatharaagni’.]

The Gayatri Mantra should be invoked and established in the fire represented by his speech (words). The sacred thread should be respectfully, with due reverence and honour, laid down to rest (i.e., it should be discarded from the body and buried in the earth) or allowed to flow away in the currents of the water (of a river, stream, or laid to rest in the calm waters of a lake or a pond).

A Brahmachari (here referring to a celibate Sanyasi—because he also observes strict self-restraint over his urges as is done by a Brahmachari) who lives in a hut should break all contacts with his family. He should abandon all pots and pans (i.e. all household and worldly belongings), including the blade of grass that is used during religious rituals to sprinkle sanctified water in order to purify everything (because he is not required to do formal rituals anymore). This piece of grass is called ‘Pavitri’ and is usually made into a ring and worn in one of the fingers. It is believed that it bestows auspiciousness on the wearer. He should even discard and refrain from carrying his staff or stick which he had been carrying earlier. He should also forsake all his dealings with the worldly fire (i.e. the external fire lit to cook food, keep warm etc.). This is what Brahma, the Creator, said.

He further continued, ‘He (a true Sanyasi) should behave as if he has not accepted any Mantra from a Guru (i.e. has not been formally initiated by any moral preceptor), and is therefore under no obligations or compunctions to follow any rigid regimen of Mantra recitals or incantations etc. He should not wish to go to heaven either. He should accept food as if it were a medicine (i.e. he should take it in regulated and in limited quantity just sufficient enough to sustain life and get proper, balance food to keep him healthy and nourished). He should bathe thrice a day.

During the evening hours, he should sit silently and meditate upon the supreme, transcendental Soul of the universe called ‘Parmatma’ (literally the ‘Supreme Atma’; here referring to the supreme Brahm, the

cosmic Consciousness). He should read all the Vedas and repeatedly study the Upanishads (i.e. he should keep his mind busy in reading the scriptures and not allow it to become a restless and an aimless vagrant, because the mind is so mischievous that if it is not kept busy it will naturally think of some nuisance which will be demeaning and degrading for the spiritual upliftment of the Sanyasi and a cause of perplexities, confoundedness and restlessness for him.' (2).

खल्वहं ब्रह्मसूत्रं सूचनात्सूत्रं ब्रह्मसूत्रमहमेव विद्वांस्त्रिवृत्सूत्रं त्यजेद्विद्वान्य एवं वेद संन्यस्तं  
मया संन्यस्तं मया संन्यस्तं मयेति त्रिरुक्त्वाऽभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते । सखा  
मा गोपायोजःसखायोऽसीन्द्रीस्य वज्रोऽसि वार्त्रघ्नः शर्म मे भव यत्पापं तन्निवारयेति ।  
अनेन मन्त्रेण कृतं वैणवं दण्डं कौपीनं परिग्रहेदौषधवदशनमाचरेदौषधवदशनं  
प्राश्नीयाद्यथालाभमश्नीयात् ।  
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसां चापरिग्रहं च सत्यं च यत्नेन हे रक्षतोऽ हे रक्षतोऽ हे रक्षत इति ॥३॥

khalvahaṃ brahmasūtram sūcanātsūtram brahmasūtramahameva  
vidvāṃstrivṛtsūtram tyajedvidvānya evaṃ veda saṃnyastaṃ mayā  
saṃnyastaṃ mayā saṃnyastaṃ mayeti triruktvā'bhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo  
mattaḥ sarvaṃ pravartate / sakhā mā gopāyojaḥsakhāyo'sindrasya vajro'si  
vārtraghnaḥ śarma me bhava yatpāpaṃ tannivārayeti / anena mantreṇa  
kṛtaṃ vāiṇavaṃ daṇḍaṃ kaupīnaṃ parigrahedaūśadhavadaśanamācare-  
daūśadhavadaśanaṃ prāśnīyādyathālābhamaśnīyāt / brahmacaryamahimśam  
cāparigrahaṃ ca satyaṃ ca yatnena he rakṣato3 he rakṣato3 he rakṣata iti //  
3 //

The following should be a true Sanyasi's conviction—'Verily, I represent that supreme Brahm who is indicated by the sacred thread which I wear; hence I do not need it any more' —thinking thus and firmly convinced of this fact (that Brahm is present in him, he is an embodiment or an image of Brahm, and he does not need any external symbol or sign, such as the sacred thread, to remind him of his exalted spiritual stature), the true renunciate should abandon the 'sacred thread', which is also known as 'Trivritsutra' because it has three strands rolled into one coil.

A person who has become enlightened enough to realise this sublime truth (that I am Brahm) should proclaim as follows three times—'I have taken to Sanyas (i.e., I have totally and sincerely forsaken this materialistic world and its accompanying delusions, artificialities, entrapments and torments), I have forsaken everything permanently, I have abandoned all!'

Then he should proclaim—'All the cruel and violent as well as docile and non-violent creatures should have no fear (from me). All the creation is symbolically present inside me, so whom should I kill or oppose or fight or have ill-will and malice or jealousy or hatred with, and who shall have enmity with me, who shall oppose or fight with me, who shall kill me and whom shall I kill?'

Then he should symbolically address his staff or stick called the ‘Danda’ and say thus—‘Oh Danda (the ascetic’s staff)! You are now my inseparable friend and companion. Protect my honour and dignity. You are like the invisible and strong ‘Bajra’ of Indra (i.e. Indra’s invincible weapon which, according to mythology, is thunderbolt) with which he had slayed the demon Vrittasur. So, I addressed you as ‘Bajra’, because, for me, you are equivalent to it. Bestow me, or bless me with happiness and peace; eliminate all the sins, misdemeanours and misdeeds that may lead me astray or make me fall wayward from the path of Sanyas (i.e. protect me from being a prey to perversions and attractions of all kinds and enable me to remain steadfast and strident on the righteous path of Sanyas, without falling to the side and being diverted from my aim of achieving emancipation and salvation for my soul’. Saying this, the Sanyasi should then hold and accept that sanctified bamboo staff or stick as his personal companion for the rest of his life along with his other companion, the loin cloth.

As a Sanyasi, he should eat food only as a medicine (i.e., in regulated quantities, sufficient enough to maintain good health, and never indulge in satisfying his taste buds).

Oh Aaruni! After accepting the vows of Sanyas, one should observe strict continence and abstinence, self control and restraint, non-violence and non-acceptance of any alms or charity, i.e., he should not take any material objects of value from this world even when they are offered to him as charity. [That is, besides the bare necessities such as food etc., he should not accept anything else.] He should speak and uphold the truth most faithfully and diligently.

Oh son! Such a person should endeavour to protect and uphold all the codes of conduct, all the edicts and tenets pertaining to a renunciate way of life. [The word ‘Rakshato’ means ‘to protect, to save, to take care of’. It is repeated thrice to lay great emphasis on this particular point—that under no circumstances, under no compulsions would the Sanyasi break the codes of conduct that he has vowed to follow as a Sanyasi, and they will never, ever be violated.] (3).

अथातः परमहंसपरिव्राजकानामासनशयनादिकं भूमौ ब्रह्मचारिणां मृत्पात्रं वाऽलाबुपात्रं  
दारुपात्रं वा । कामक्रोधहर्षरोषलोभमोहदम्भदर्पेच्छासूयाममत्वाहंकारादीनपि परित्यजेत्  
। वर्षासु ध्रुवशीलोऽष्टौ मासानेकाकी यतिश्चरेद् द्वावे वा चरेद् द्वावे वा चरेदिति ॥४॥

athātaḥ paramahaṃsaparivrājakānāmāsanaśayanādikaṃ bhūmau brahma-  
cāriṇāṃ mṛtpātraṃ vā’lābupātraṃ dārupātraṃ vā / kāmakrodhaharṣaroṣa-  
lobhamohadambhadarpecchāsūyāmatvāhaṅkāradīnapi parityajet / varṣāsu  
dhruvaśīlo’ṣṭau māsānekākī yatiścaret dvāve vā cared dvāve vā carediti // 4 //

After that, those enlightened persons who are called ‘Paramhans Parivrajak’<sup>1</sup> and who have attained the high emotional state of identifying themselves with the supreme Brahm and can meditate upon him with ease, are prescribed, and expected, to sit and sleep on the earth (instead of a

stool or a bed). They should keep a clay pot, a hollowed out and dried pumpkin or a wooden pot called 'Kamandal' with them<sup>2</sup>.

A Sanyasi (a renunciate mendicant, a hermit and an ascetic) should fully forsake 'Kaam' (worldly passions, desires and lust), 'Krodha' (anger, vehemence, wrath, losing the cool of their mind), 'Harsha' (feeling elated, joyous and exhilarated), 'Shoka' (sorrows, anguish, grief), 'Roshā' (wrathfulness, vehemence; getting very annoyed, rage, fury, exasperation, indignation), 'Lobha' (greed, avarice, rapacity, yearning), 'Moha' (attachments, attraction, infatuations), 'Dambha' (deceit, conceit, imposter, hypocrisy and cunning), 'Irshya' (envy, jealousy, ill will, malice), 'Ichha' (hope, expectation, desire, wish, want), 'Mamta' (endearments, longing, love, infatuations), 'Ahankar' (haughtiness, ego, pride, vanity), and all other such negative traits which are like different spots on the body or are like blemishes or tarnishes on the character of the Sanyasi.

A Sanyasi should stay at a single place (location, site) during the four months of the rainy season. Aside of this, he should always keep on the move, roaming alone for the rest of the eight months. He should at least stay at a place for a continuous period of two months (if he does not feel like spending the whole period of four months of the rainy season at a single place due to any circumstance) (4).

[Note :- 'The word 'Param' means supreme, transcendental, great, most exalted, a sublime state; 'Hans' means a divine swan; 'Parivrajak' means a renunciate mendicant who is constantly on the move.

<sup>2</sup>A 'Kamandal' is needed to collect water and other essential things, such as cooked food, while the 'Sanyasi' is on the move.]

स खल्वेवं यो विद्वान्सोपनयनादूर्ध्वमेतानि प्राग्वा त्यजेत् । पितरं पुत्रमग्निमुपवीतं  
कर्म कलत्रं चान्यदपीह । यतयो भिक्षार्थं ग्रामं प्रविशन्ति पाणिपात्रमुदरपात्रं वा । ॐ  
हि ॐ हि ॐ ह्रीत्येतदुपनिषदं विन्यसेत् । खल्वेतदुपनिषदं विद्वान्य एवं वेद  
पालाशं वैल्वमाश्वत्थमौदुम्बरं दण्डं मौञ्जीं मेखलां यज्ञोपवीतं च त्यक्त्वा शूरो य एवं  
वेद । तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः । दिवीव चक्षुराततम् । तद्विप्रासो  
विपन्यवो जागृवांसः समिन्धते । विष्णोर्यत्परमं पदमिति । एवं निर्वाणानुशासनं  
वेदानुशासनं वेदानुशासनम् । इत्युपनिषद् ॥५॥

sa khalvevaṃ yo vidvānsopanayanādūrdhvametaṇi prāgvā tyajet / pitaraṃ  
putramagnimupavītaṃ karma kalatraṃ cānyadapīha / yatayo bhikṣārthaṃ  
grāmaṃ praviśanti pāṇipātramudarapātraṃ vā / om hi om hi om  
hītyetadupaniṣadaṃ vinyaset / khalvetadupaniṣadaṃ vidvānya evaṃ veda  
pālāśaṃ bailvamaśvatthamaudumbaraṃ daṇḍaṃ mauñjīṃ mekhalāṃ  
yajñopavītaṃ ca tyaktvā śūro ya evaṃ veda / tadviṣṇoḥ paramaṃ padaṃ  
sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ / divīva cakṣurātataṃ / tadviprāso vipanyavo  
jāgrvāṃsaḥ samindhate / viṣṇoryatparamaṃ padamiti / evaṃ  
nirvāṇānuśāsaṇaṃ vedānuśāsaṇaṃ vedānuśāsaṇaṃ / ityupaniṣad // 5 //

That person who is fully aware of and ready to follow all the strict edicts and tenets, laws and by-laws, rules and regulations of the path of Sanyas and wish to accept these vows voluntarily and cheerfully, then he can do so, whether it is done before or after his formal initiation ceremony 'or baptism', called the Upnayan ceremony (when the sacred thread, sanctified by a Guru or teacher, is put on his shoulder, and the initiation Mantras from the scriptures are pronounced in his ear). For this, he should completely, formally and finally disassociate himself from and totally forsake all his relations with his family, such as his mother, father, son, wife, the sacrificial fire (i.e. the hearth of a householder), the sacred thread, all deeds and actions, or any other thing that he might possess or own in this world or involved in.

A person accepting the path of Sanyas should either make his hands (the cupped palms of the hands) as a cup or platter, or treat his stomach as the pot (to collect food). To beg for food, he should go to a village. [The visit to a village should be done to procure just enough cooked food as to fill his stomach. He has to eat out of his hands, and not from a pot or plate made of anything. Storing of food separately is prohibited for a Sanyasi.]

While entering the village (in search of food), he should pronounce the divine Mantra 'OM HI' (literally meaning 'Om salutation; It is only OM'; or 'Om is all there is') 3 times as announcement of his arrival in the village. [This helps the villagers to get ready to welcome him.]

This is an Upanishad. Those who know the contents and have a deep knowledge of this and other Upanishads are indeed considered to be wise, erudite, expert and scholarly.

A person who holds a staff or stick made of the branch of either of these trees— (i) 'Palash' (Butea Frondosa), (ii) 'Bel' (the wood apple), (iii) 'Peepal' (Banyan), and (iv) 'Gular' (the wild fig tree; Ficus Glomerata), who wears a loin cloth around his waist and a sack cloth made of coarse jute to cover the body, who abandons even his sacred thread (i.e. he symbolically casts away his pride that he is born in an upper class of society, or is more superior in birth and knowledge and wisdom as compared to his brethren) and understands this Upanishad properly, is indeed a most exalted, most superior, most brave and most courageous Sanyasi. [Brave and courageous because the rigid life of a Sanyasi will scare away lesser mortals, and only those who are wise and erudite will see the ambrosia of eternity of emancipation and salvation lying at the end of the road for them after they have tread through this arduous journey of difficulties and hardships. The knowledge of this Upanishad will only strengthen their resolve to overcome all the hurdles patiently and reach that ambrosia, because they will be fully mentally prepared to face them.]

A wise worshipper adores and worships (and hopes to reach) the divine, sublime and supreme abode of Lord Vishnu, which is radiant with the eternal light symbolising enlightenment which radiates in all the directions and illuminates everything around it in the heavens situated in the vast sky above just like the celestial sun illuminates the solar system.

Wise and erudite seeker who selflessly pursues the path of 'Sadhana' (that is, who are focused in their spiritual pursuits without being effected by any distractions and getting deviated from their chosen path, who meditate and contemplate upon the supreme Truth, who



observes austerities and penances and concentrate their energy on the pure consciousness, i.e. Brahm or their own Atma) are able to reach that supreme and divine abode where they enhance its illumination, brilliance, magnificence and glory with their own radiance. Such an exalted and supreme stature is synonymous with the abode of Vishnu. It is called the Vishnu Loka.

This is the way to obtain liberation and deliverance as well as emancipation and salvation as enunciated by the Vedas, and this is what the Upanishads also ratify and endorse. This Upanishad has laid down and affirmed the eclectic principles pertaining to Sanyas as narrated herein above (5).

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## (2.2) Maitraayana-panishad:

Belonging to the Sam Veda tradition, it is a discourse between king Brihadrath and sage Shakayanya. The knowledge contained in this Upanishad was 1<sup>st</sup> enunciated and expounded by sage Maitreya, hence the name of the Upanishad bears his name.

In canto 1, the king expresses his confusions and doubts about the world and his dismay at its transient and decayable nature. He asks the sage to enlighten him about the truth of existence.

In Canto 2, the sage describes about the Atma and the various vital winds, and uses the allegory of a chariot to explain the various aspects of the body and the Atma.

Canto 3 highlights the distinction between the supreme cosmic Soul called the 'Parmatma' and the individual soul of the creature called the 'Bhoot Atma'. It defines the latter's characteristic features. The various qualities (Gunas) inherent in a 'Bhoot Atma' are enumerated and elucidated at the end of this Canto. Metaphors of an iron smith and a potter are used to explain how the 'Bhoot Atma' of the creature is distinct from the pure consciousness called the 'Atma'.

Canto 4 deals with the importance of the mind and the eclectic ways by which it can be controlled and harnessed for salvation of the 'Bhoot Atma', the creature. This canto also enumerates the greatest of axiomatic tenets of the Vedas in a systematic manner so that they act like a virtual moral guide book for spiritual aspirants (especially verse no. 4 A—4 K). It goes on to define Brahm in different ways (verse no. 4 L—4 O and verse no. 5).

Canto 5 exclusively deals with the Sun as a visible manifestation of the Brahm as well as of the Atma and the cosmic word OM. The Gayatri or Savitri Mantra is elaborately described with its relevance to the Sun.

## Canto 1

ॐ बृहद्रथो ह वै नाम राजा राज्ये ज्येष्ठं पुत्रं निधापयित्वेदमशाश्वतं मन्यमानः शारीरं  
 वैराग्यमुपेतोऽरण्यं निर्जगाम । स तत्र परमं तप आस्थायादित्यमीक्षमाण  
 ऊर्ध्वबाहुस्तिष्ठत्यन्ते सहस्रस्य मुनिरन्तिकमाजगामाग्निरिवाधूमकस्तेजसा  
 निर्दहन्निवात्मविद् भगवाञ्छाकायन्य उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ वरं वृणीष्वेति राजानमब्रवीत्स  
 तस्मै नमस्कृत्योवाच भगवन्नाहमात्मवित्त्वं तत्त्वविच्छृणुमो वयं स त्वं नो  
 ब्रूहीत्येतद्वृत्तं पुरस्तादशक्यं मा पृच्छ प्रश्नमैक्षाकान्यान्कामान्वृणीष्वेति शाकायन्यस्य  
 चरणावभिमृश्यमानो राजेमां गाथां जगाद ॥१॥

om br̥hadratho ha vai nāma rājā rājye jyeṣṭhaṁ putraṁ nidhāpayitvedama-  
 śāśvataṁ manyamānaḥ śārīraṁ vairāgyamupeto'raṇyaṁ nirjagāma / sa tatra  
 paramaṁ tapa āsthāyādityamīkṣamāṇa ūrdhvbāhustīṣṭhatyante sahasrasya  
 munirantikamājagāmāgnirivādhūmakastejasā nirdahannivātmavid  
 bhagavāñchākāyanya uttiṣṭhottīṣṭha varam vṛṇīśveti rājānamabravītsa tasmai  
 namaskṛtyovāca bhagavannāhamātmavittvaṁ tattvavicchṛṇumo vayaṁ sa  
 tvaṁ no brūhītyetadvṛttaṁ purastādaśakyaṁ mā pṛccha praśnamaikṣvā-  
 kānyānkāmānvṛṇīśveti śākāyanyasya caraṇāvabhimṛśyamāno rājemāṁ  
 gāthāṁ jagāda // 1 //

Om salutations! A king named Brihadrath developed a sense of profound renunciation when he acquired wisdom strong enough to realise the perishable, decayable, mortal, transient and temporary nature of his body. That is why he gave the reign of the kingdom to his eldest son and went to the forest. There he did severe 'Tapa' (penance and austerity with the accompanying hardship and endured all of it with resilience) for a long time. Daily he used to look towards the Sun and kept standing with his hands stretched upwards towards it (in a form of prayer and as a mark of paying tributes and obeisance to the Sun). After a period of 1000 years of doing severe 'Tapa' in this way and as a result (or blessing or reward) of it, a self-realised, erudite, wise and enlightened sage named Shakayanya, who was an expert and well-versed in the knowledge of the Atma (soul/spirit), came to him. The sage had a glowing spiritual radiance about him that resembled the brilliance of fire which has no smoke. That exalted sage said to the king, 'Oh king! Get up and ask for a boon or blessing'.

The king bowed reverentially before the sage and said, 'Oh Lord! I am not an expert in the knowledge of the Atma; I have heard that you are well versed in the knowledge of Brahm and have deep insight into the essential aspects and principles governing it. Hence, bless me with a boon of truthful knowledge of that absolute Truth and universal Reality'.

Hearing this, the exalted sage replied, 'Oh the king of the Ikshwaku clan! Ask for some other boon. Do not ask such question which has been traditionally regarded as being very difficult to answer from ancient times'.

Hearing this, king Brihadrath bowed at the feet of the exalted sage Shakayanya and said as follows— (1).

भगवन्नस्थिचर्मस्नायुमज्जामांसशुक्रशोणितश्लेष्माश्रुदूषिते विण्मूत्रवातपित्तकफसंघाते  
दुर्गन्धेः निःसारेऽस्मिञ्छरीरे किं कामोपभोगैः ॥२॥

bhagavannasthicarmasnāyumajjāmāṃsaśukraśoṇitaśleṣmāśrudūṣite viṇ-  
mūtravātapittakaphasaṅghāte durgandhe niḥsāre'smiñcharīre kiṃ kāmopa-  
bhogaiḥ // 2 //

‘Oh Lord! This body is full of (or consists of nothing else but) bones, skins, nerves/veins, bone marrow, flesh, blood, tears, vomit, faecal matters, urine, wind, bile, mucous etc.

This body is foul smelling and stinking; it lacks any worthwhile essence (and is most abhorable and despicable). Then what is the use of comforts that one endeavours to seek for it, and what is the use of the gratification of the sense organs of the body, both leading to having a train of desires, expectations and hopes (2).

कामक्रोधलोभभयविषादेर्ष्येष्टवियोगानिष्ट  
संप्रयोगक्षुत्पिपासाजरामृत्युरोगशोकाद्यैरभिहतेऽस्मिञ्छरीरे किं कामोपभोगैः ॥३॥

kāmakrodhalobhabhayaviṣāderṣyeṣṭaviyogāniṣṭa saṃprayogakṣutpipāsā-  
jarāmṛtyurogaśokādyairabhihate'smiñcharīre kiṃ kāmopabhogaiḥ // 3 //

Passions/desires (Kaam), anger/wrath/venegance (Krodha), greed/avarice/rapacity (Lobha), fears/consternations (Bhaye), grief/anguish/sorrow/despair/dejection (Vishaad), jealousy/envy/malice (Irshya), agony and torments of separation from those who are dear, or from objects which one loves to have (Viyog) as well as the mental and physical discomfort and agitation caused by meeting those who are hated and not liked (Samprayog), from sufferings arising out of hunger and thirst (Kshutpipasa), old age and death (Jara-mrityu), sorrows and torments of all kinds, including from various diseases and afflictions (Roga-shoka)—all of these give a lot of trouble to the body. In such a situation, what is the use or worth of having various hopes and desires, ambitions and aspirations, volitions and expectations as well as seeking and yearning for comforts and gratifications, because none of these give peace either to the mind or the body? (3).

सर्वं चेदं क्षयिष्णु पश्यामो यथेमे दंशमशकादयस्तृणवन्नश्यतयोद्भूतप्रध्वंसिनः ॥४॥

sarvaṃ cedam kṣayiṣṇu paśyāmo yatheme daṃśamaśakādayastrṇavan-  
naśyatayodbhūtapradhvaṃsinaḥ // 4 //

This whole world is momentary and transient. I constantly observe men and other mortal creatures made up of the five basic elements being subjected to constant and persistent destruction and decay. [That is, I see the people and other creatures constantly dying all around me, without exception.]

Myriad of wretched and humble creatures such as those having teeth as well as insects and worms are born and then devoured by death after sometime (4).

[Note—The five basic elements are: sky, air, fire, water and earth in ascending order of grossness.]

अथ किमेतैर्वा परेऽन्ये महाधुनर्धराश्चक्रवर्तिनः केचित्सुद्युम्नभूरिद्युम्नेन्द्रद्युम्नकुवल्याश्च  
यौवनाश्ववध्रियाश्चाश्वपतिः शशबिन्दुर्हरिश्चन्द्रोऽम्बरीषोऽननूक्तः  
स्वयातिर्ययातिरनरण्योक्षसेनोत्थमरुतभरतप्रभृतयो राजानो मिषतो बन्धुवर्गस्य महतीं श्रियं  
त्यक्त्वास्माल्लोकादमुं लोकं प्रयान्ति ॥५॥

atha kimetairvā pare'nye mahādhanurdharāścakravartinaḥ kecitsudyumna-  
bhūridyumnendradyumnakualayāśva yauvanāśvavaddhriyāśvāśvapatiḥ  
śaśabindurhariścandro'mbarīṣo'nanūktaḥ svayātirayātiranaraṇyokṣaseno-  
tthamaruttabharaṭaprabhṛtayo rājāno miṣato bandhuvargasya mahatīm  
śriyaṃ tyaktvāsmāllokādamuṃ lokaṃ prayānti // 5 //

What do these humble and lowly creatures count when so many great warriors who were proud of their bows (i.e., the strength of their arms) and were most valiant, powerful, strong, majestic and seemingly invincible, such as the likes of the great emperor kings Sudyumna, Bhuridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuwalyaashwa, Youwanaashwa, Vadhriyaashwa, Ashwapati, Shasha Bindu, Harishchandra, Ambarish, Anunukta, Swayaati, Yayaati, Anaranya, Ukshasen, Uttha, Marut and Bharat etc.\*, had to leave behind all the glory, pomp, pageantry, majesty and magnificence of the world behind them when they suddenly shed their mortal coils (i.e. their bodies, when they died) and went to the other world (the heaven) along with their kith and kin (at the time of their deaths) (5).

[\*“kecitsudyumna-bhūridyumnendradyumnakualayāśva  
yauvanāśvavaddhriyāśvāśvapatiḥ śaśabindurhariścandro'mbarīṣo'nanūktaḥ  
svayātirayātiranaraṇyokṣaseno-tthamaruttabharaṭaprabhṛtayo rājāno”]

अथ किमेतैर्वा परेऽन्ये गन्धर्वसुरयक्षराक्षसभूतगणपिशाचोरगग्रहादीनां निरोधनं पश्यामः ॥६॥

atha kimetairvā pare'nye gandharvāsuraṇyākṣarākṣasabhūtagaṇapīśācora-  
gagrahādīnāṃ nirodhanam paśyāmaḥ // 6 //

Not only humans, we see even the ‘Gandharvas’ (celestial musicians), the ‘Yakshas’ (a demi-God who is the guard of the treasury of the Gods), the various categories of ogres/monsters/demons, and other evil spirits such as

phantoms/ghosts and goblins, the serpents and other reptiles, the stars and the planets and their satellites—all are being subject to constant, persistent and regular decay and destruction (and are completely annihilated when their time comes) (6).

अथ किमेतैर्वान्यानां शोषणं महार्णवानां शिखरिणां प्रपतनं ध्रुवस्य प्रचलनं स्थानं वा तरूणां निमज्जनं पृथिव्याः स्थानादपसरणं सुराणां सोऽहमित्येतद्विधेऽस्मिन्संसारे किं कामोपभोगैर्यैरेवाश्रितस्यासमृदिहावर्तनं दृश्यत इत्युद्धर्तुमर्हसीत्यन्धोदपानस्थो भेक इवाहमस्मिन्संसारे भगवंस्त्वं नो गतिस्त्वं नो गतिः ॥७॥

atha kimetaivānyānāṃ śoṣaṇaṃ mahārṇavānāṃ śikhariṇāṃ prapatanam dhruvasya pracalanam sthānam vā tarūṇāṃ nimajjanam pṛthivyāḥ sthānādapasaraṇam surāṇāṃ so'hamityetadvidhe'sminsamsāre kiṃ kāmopabhogairyairevāśritasyāsamṛdihāvartanam dṛśyata ityuddhartumarhasītyandhodapānastho bheka ivāhamasminsamsāre bhagavamstvam no gativam no gatiḥ // 7 //

Besides this, even if we overlook or keep aside the animate world, the rest of the inanimate world—or the non-living, non conscious world—is also subjected to the same fate. For example, huge oceans and seas dry up, great mountain ranges are disrupted, eroded and crumbled bit by bit in a gradual manner to pieces of boulders, pebbles and stone chips, small or big and reduced even to particles of dust.

Even the poles (the north and the south pole of the earth as well as the cardinal points of the cosmic atlas) cannot remain permanently in their place; the trees fall and decay, the earth too cannot remain forever in its present state, and the Gods are also known to be demoted (and promoted) from their existing positions.

In such a volatile situation and an existence which is in constant flux, it is observed that those who are indulgent in gratification of their senses and enjoyment of this world full of 'Ahankar' (अहंकार —i.e., pride, ego, haughtiness, hypocrisy) are repeatedly trapped in the vicious cycle of birth and death (transmigration) which is so characteristic of this delusionary, transient, perishable and mortal world.

For this reason, oh exalted sage, it appears to me that I too am present in a most condemned, wretched, miserable and lowly state in this perishable and transient world just like a toad lives in a dark well symbolising the grave darkness of ignorance in which I find myself. Please be kind to grace me with the blessing of a stature similar to that of yours (i.e., make me as wise, enlightened, sagacious, erudite, self realised and exalted as you are) so that I find liberation and deliverance (from this world/like dark well). I have come to seek your blessing and shelter (and so expect solace and succour from you who are an exalted and merciful sage). You are my only hope and succour; my only refuge and support.' (7).

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

## Canto 2

अथ भगवाञ्छाकायन्यः सुप्रीतोऽब्रवीद्राजानं महाराज बृहद्रथेक्ष्वाकुवंशध्वजशीर्षात्मजः  
कृतकृत्यस्त्वं मरुन्नाम्नो विश्रुतोऽसीत्ययं वाव खल्वात्मा ते कतमो भगवान्वर्ण्य इति तं  
होवाचेति ॥१॥

atha bhagavāñchākāyanyaḥ supṛīto'bravīdrājānaṁ mahārāja bṛhadrathe-  
kṣvākuvamśadhvaśīrṣātmajaḥ kṛtakṛtyastvaṁ marunnāmno viśruto-  
'sītyayaṁ vāva khalvātmā te katamo bhagavānvarṇya iti taṁ hovāceti // 1 //

On hearing the earnest pleadings of the king (Brihadrath), the most exalted sage (Shakayanya) said, 'Oh great king Brihadrath! You are the son of king Dwajshirsha born in the clan of the kings of the 'Ikshwaku race'. You are fulfilled and contented in every possible way, and are famed by the name of 'Marut'. What and who is this Atma (soul/spirit), what are its peculiar characteristics? Now I shall try to tell you the essential principles of this peculiar subject'.

The king said, 'Oh exalted sage! Please be kind to surely enlighten me on the relevant topics of this subject and elucidate upon them elaborately.' (1).

अथ य एषो बाह्यावष्टम्भनेनोर्ध्वमुत्क्रान्तो व्यथमानोऽव्यथमानस्तमः प्रणुदत्येष आत्मेत्याह भगवानथ य  
एष संप्रसादोऽस्माञ्छरीरात्समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरुपसंपद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यत एष आत्मेति  
होवाचैतदमृतमभयमेतद्वह्मेति ॥२॥

atha ya eṣo bāhyāvaṣṭambhanenordhvamutkrānto vyathamāno'vyathamāna-  
stamaḥ praṇudatyēṣa ātmetyāha bhagavānatha ya eṣa saṁprasādo'smāñ-  
charīrātsamutthāya paraṁ jyotirupasampadya svena rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyata eṣa  
ātmēti hovācītaḥ tamabhayametadbrahmeti // 2 //

The sage began his discourse—'Oh king! By exerting restraint on the external organs of the body', the Atma—which is the essence of the life of a creature, the driving force of the creature and is akin to the 'Pran' (the vital wind force of life, breath)—moves upwards (i.e. is upgraded or promoted) through the medium of Yoga (meditation). Though it (life) might appear to be full of sorrows, in fact it is not so, for it is essentially free from and beyond the scope and reach of sorrows and torments. It is potent enough to destroy the darkness of ignorance and delusions.

The same Atma, which is the vital life infusing 'Pran' or wind or breath inside the creature, leaves this perishable, gross and mortal body and comes out of it (at the time of death), accepts and merges with the self-illuminated, supreme essence of all that exists, an entity which is the authority and the absolute Truth and Reality of existence and life, and

which is the true and original form of the Atma. Hence, that entity is called the supreme Atma. [The Atma of the individual merges with its parent body, the supreme Atma, which is the soul/spirit of the cosmos even as the Atma is the soul/spirit of the individual.]

This Atma is essentially like the nectar or the elixir of eternity and fearlessness, and it is an embodiment or image of Brahm himself (2).

[Note :- 'The *body* of a creature has 5 organs of action and 5 organs of perception. They are as follows— (a) organs of action— hands, legs, mouth, genitals and anus, (b) organs of perception— eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin.]

अथ खल्वियं ब्रह्मविद्या सर्वोपनिषद्विद्या वा राजन्नस्माकं भगवता मैत्रेयेण व्याख्याताहं  
ते कथयिष्यामीत्यथापहतपाप्मानस्तिग्मतेजस ऊर्ध्वरेतसो वालखिल्या इति श्रूयन्तेऽथैते  
प्रजापतिमब्रुवन्भगवञ्शकटमिवाचेतनमिदं शरीरं कस्यैष खल्वीदृशो  
महिमातीन्द्रियभूतस्य येनैतद्विधमिदं चेतनवत्प्रतिष्ठापितं प्रचोदयितास्य को  
भगवन्नेतदस्माकं ब्रूहीति तान्होवाच ॥३॥

atha khalviyaṃ brahmavidyā sarvopaniṣadvidyā vā rājannasmākaṃ bhagavatā  
maitreyaṇa vyākhyātāhaṃ te kathayīṣyāmi tyathāpahatapāpmānastigmatejasa  
ūrdhvaretaso vālakhilyā iti śrūyante'thaite prajāpatimabruvanbhaga-  
vañśakaṭamivācetanamidaṃ śarīraṃ kasyaiṣa khalvīdṛśo mahimātīndriya-  
bhūtasya yenaitadvidhamidaṃ cetanavatpratiṣṭhāpitaṃ pracodayitāsy ko  
bhagavannetadasmākaṃ brūhīti tānhovāca // 3 //

‘Oh King! The pristine and supreme knowledge of Brahm that is unanimously proclaimed, propounded, enunciated and expounded by all the Upanishads in an unequivocal, unified, uniform and one voice, has been narrated to me by Lord Maitreya. I shall tell (literally, give) that supreme knowledge to you.

There is a sage by the name of ‘Valkhilya’. All his sins have been destroyed (eliminated) by doing ‘Sadhana’ (various diligent efforts made to accomplish success in any endeavour, specially religious and spiritual ones), and he is radiant and glorious with a spiritual halo/energy effusing from him and surrounding him from all sides. He observes ‘Brahmacharya’ (i.e. he follows the rigid tenets of self restraint, abstinence and continence).

That exalted sage (Valkhilya) asked a similar question (as you have asked me) from Brahma (the creator), ‘Oh Brahmin! This body is like a lifeless vehicle. Then what is that subtle force, which is that glorious authority having the potentials to infuse/inject life into it and render it conscious as if it had life of its own?

The entity that inspires this body and injects life into it is said to be beyond the reach or purview of speech (i.e. words or voice cannot describe it). Oh Lord, please be kind to tell me about that excellent and supreme essential Truth.’ (3).

यो ह खलु वाचोपरिस्थः श्रूयते स वा एष शुद्धः पूतः शून्यः शान्तः  
प्राणोऽनीशात्माऽनन्तोऽक्षय्यः स्थिरः शाश्वतोऽजः स्वतन्त्रः स्वे महिम्नि तिष्ठत्यनेनेदं शरीरं  
चेतनवत्प्रतिष्ठापितं प्रचोदयिता चैषोऽस्येति ते होचुर्भगवन्कथमनेनेदृशेनानिच्छेनैतद्विधमिदं  
चेतनवत्प्रतिष्ठापितं प्रचोदयिता चैषोऽस्येति कथमिति तान्होवाच ॥४॥

yo ha khalu vācoparisthaḥ śrūyate sa eva vā eṣa śuddhaḥ pūtaḥ śūnyaḥ  
śāntaḥ prāṇo'nīśatmā'nanto'kṣayyaḥ sthiraḥ śāśvato'jaḥ svatantraḥ sve  
mahimni tiṣṭhatyanenedaṁ śārīraṁ cetanavatpratiṣṭhāpitaṁ pracodayitā  
caiṣo'syeti te hocurbhagavankathamaneṇedṛśenānicchenaitadvidhamidaṁ  
cetanavatpratiṣṭhāpitaṁ pracodayitā caiṣo'syeti kathamiti tānhovāca // 4 //

(Brahma replied to Valkhilya—) ‘That absolute Truth, that supreme and essential element which you are talking about is called the ‘Atma’ (soul). It is characterised by being pure, pristine, immaculate and uncorrupt, it is like a void (i.e. it has neither good or bad qualities in it; it is neutral), it is peaceful, tranquil, calm and serene, it is a provider/bestower of life, it is eternal, infinite, imperishable, universal, truthful, most ancient, primary and primordial, traditional, stable and unwavering, without a birth (and hence without a death), and it has an independent existence. This is all its great glory that we see around us. It is due to that Atma that this lifeless gross body is empowered with the authority to have life and consciousness. It is that Atma—which is the Authority characterised by the virtue of possessing the element that is pure conscious—that inspires, impels and motivates the body of all the creatures of the creation.’

After hearing it, the great sage Valkhilya asked again, ‘Oh Lord! Though this Atma is not describable and not under the control of desires, then how does it remain in this body as pure consciousness? Why does it give life and infuse the body with the conscious factor which enables the otherwise inane, inert and lifeless gross body to acquire the virtues and characteristics of life and consciousness? And what is the significance, the importance and the implications of this glorious, majestic and magnificent aspect of the Atma?’ (4).

स वा एष सूक्ष्मोऽग्राह्योऽदृश्यः पुरुषसंज्ञको बुद्धिपूर्वमिहैवावर्ततेऽशेन सुषुप्तस्यैव बुद्धिपूर्वं  
निबोधयत्यथ यो ह खलु वावैतस्यांशोऽयं यश्चेतनमात्रः प्रतिपुरुषं क्षेत्रज्ञः  
संकल्पाध्यवसायाभिमानलिङ्गः प्रजापतिर्विश्वाक्षस्तेन चेतनेनेदं शरीरं चेतनवत्प्रतिष्ठापितं  
प्रचोदयिता चैषोऽस्येति ते होचुर्भगवन्नीदृशस्य कथमंशेन वर्तनमिति तान्होवाच ॥५॥

sa vā eṣa sūkṣmo'grāhyo'drśyaḥ puruṣasaṁjñako buddhipūrvamihaivā-  
vartateṁ'sena suṣuptasyaiva buddhipūrvaṁ nibodhayatyatha yo ha khalu  
vāvāitasyāṁśo'yaṁ yaścetanamātraḥ pratipuruṣaṁ kṣetrajñaḥ saṁkalpādhyava-  
sāyābhimānaliṅgaḥ prajāpatirviśvākṣastena cetanenedaṁ śārīraṁ  
cetanavatpratiṣṭhāpitaṁ pracodayitā caiṣo'syeti te hocurbhagavannīdṛśasya  
kathamamśena vartanamiti tānhovāca // 5 //



(Brahma replied—) ‘The Atma is most subtle and microscopic; it is beyond reach and is invisible. This is why it is known by the term ‘Purush’ (literally ‘a male’, but here it is not a reference to a human male but to the macrocosmic male form of the supreme Being that is known as the ‘Viraat Purush’, a form that has a cosmic dimension, is all-encompassing, all-pervading and omnipresent in creation).

That Atma intelligently enters this body through its own minuscule fraction, though it has no cause or reason to do so. [That is, we have to apply intelligence to understand that Atma which also resides in the body of the creature as much as it resides outside of it in the cosmos.] Even though a creature appears to be asleep, the pure consciousness deftly, subtly and imperceptibly keeps it alive<sup>1</sup>.

It is present in every body as the enlightened, self illuminated and live factor called the ‘Atma’ which is omniscient (it knows everything that is worth knowing in the realm where it has its authority; and this realm is the entire cosmos). It observes and witnesses the world in the form of light; it has determination, it makes efforts, it has pride and ego known as ‘Ahankar’, it has a gender (male and female etc) and it is known as ‘Prajapati’ (the custodian or guardian or caretaker of the world)<sup>2</sup>.

It is the potentials and conscious powers of the Atma that makes the body conscious. It is the Atma that lends its glorious sheen and powers called ‘consciousness’ to the body which empowers the latter to act like it were a living entity having its own consciousness. It is the Atma that makes it active, live and conscious, but the body itself has no such virtues if it is left to its own devices.’

Sage Valkhilya asked again, ‘Oh Lord! In spite of being unfractionable, uniform, indivisible, immutable and one, which cannot be broken or partitioned into fragments, how is it that the Atma is present here in its fractional form or as a part of its complete whole (in the individual creature as his individual Atma)?’ (5)

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>During sleep, the body shows no signs of activity; it does not do anything or take any actions. It lies apparently like a dead body. The only factor that distinguishes a dead body from a sleeping body is the consciousness or Atma present in the latter which enables the body to keep itself alive. A dead body cannot be revived, but a sleeping body, after it wakes up, reverts to doing all its previous deeds, taking all the actions and living a normal life as it used to do prior to falling asleep, a case not applicable to a dead body. So the factor that distinguishes these two types of bodies, which look apparently similar from external observations, is the Atma which is not present in a dead body but present in a sleeping body.

<sup>2</sup>The Atma is the ‘light’ that illuminates the world, it is in its myriad and various forms that ‘drives’ this world —such as having ‘determinations’ to do anything, making ‘efforts’ to do it, the ‘ego’ that drives all ambitions and efforts in the world, the ‘pride’ that is derived from success and accomplishment and their accompanying honours and pleasures, the flourishing of the world by conjugal relationship of ‘males and females’, and the Gods known as ‘Prajapati’ who preside over all the drama—all these aspects are a play staged by the Atma. The Atma remains a spectator of all that is happening around it, it witnesses the

events unfolding before it, though it is the one who has started the ball rolling. It acts like a judicious king who controls his realm —and the realm in this case is the body of the creature and the world in which it lives and with which it interacts. In order to dispense justice and control his subjects, a king ought to have the ‘knowledge of what is happening in his realm’, and therefore the Atma is also called a ‘Kshetrageya’, or an all-knowing, omniscient entity that is fully aware of everything around it.]

प्रजापतिर्वा एषोऽग्रेऽतिष्ठत्स नारमतैकः स आत्मानमभिध्यायद्वह्वीः प्रजा असृजत्ता  
अस्यैवात्मप्रबुद्धा अप्राणा स्थाणुरिव तिष्ठमाना अपश्यत्स नारमत सोऽमन्यतैतासां  
प्रतिबोधनायाभ्यन्तरं प्राविशानीत्यथ स वायुमिवात्मानं कृत्वाभ्यन्तरं प्राविशत्स एको नाविशत्स  
पञ्चधात्मानं प्रविभज्योच्यते यः प्राणोऽपानः समान उदानो व्यान इति ॥६॥

prajāpatirvā eṣo'gre'tiṣṭhatsa nāramataikaḥ sa ātmānamabhidhyāyadbahvīḥ  
prajā asrjatta asyaivātmāmaprabuddhā aprāṇā sthāṇuriva tiṣṭhamānā apaśyatsa  
nāramata so'manyataitāsaṃ pratibodhanāyābhyantaram prāviśānītyatha sa  
vāyumivātmānam kṛtvābhyantaram prāviśatsa eko nāviśatsa pañcadhāt-  
mānam pravibhajyocyate yaḥ prāṇo'pānaḥ samāna udāno vyāna iti // 6 //

Brahma replied, ‘Oh great sage! In the beginning there was only ‘Prajapati’ alone (i.e. there was no one except Prajapati in the beginning of creation). [The word ‘Prajapati’ means a king who is the lord and guardian of the subjects of his kingdom. Here it means the Creator Brahma who is the guardian of all the creatures he has created in his creation.]

He did not enjoy being alone, so he thought of or remembered his Atma (to remove his loneliness). That is, he invoked his hidden potentials and powers of creativity in order to fulfill his desires of not being alone. As a result of which he created his myriad subjects having so many different forms with as many permutations and combinations. The creation which he produced or crafted appeared lifeless and dead as a pillar. Then looking at his subject, the creation, which lacked life, activity, intelligence, agility and vitality, he decided to enter their bosoms (inner-selves) to make them live, active, intelligent, vibrant, vigorous, strong and agile.

[Prajapati was dismayed and distressed at his own creation which he had created to remove his loneliness, because the product which he produced was lifeless and worthless and was of no use to him. The circumstance of loneliness remained as before. ‘What is the use of creating a lifeless litter if I can’t enjoy playing with them, if I cannot enjoy their company’, thought Prajapati.]

So, he assumed a subtle, invisible, imperceptible but most potential and magnificent form of the ‘wind element’ (the vital wind called ‘Pran’ and other winds) and entered the litter produced by him. Prajapati split himself into 5 components of the wind force (Vayu) which are the

following—(i) Pran/Praan, Apan/Apaan, Saman/Samaan, Udan/Udaan and Vyan/Vyaan (prāṇo'pānaḥ samāna udāno vyāna) (6).

अथ योऽयमूर्ध्वमुत्क्रामतीत्येष वाव स प्राणोऽथ योयमवाञ्चं संक्रामत्येष वाव सोऽपानोऽथ योऽयं स्थविष्ठमन्नधातुमपाने स्थापयत्यणिष्ठं चाङ्गेऽङ्गे समं नयत्येष वाव स समानोऽथ योऽयं पीताशितमुद्गिरति निगिरतीति चैष वाव स उदानोऽथ येनैताः शिरा अनुव्याप्ता एष वाव स व्यानः ॥७॥

atha yo'yamūrdhvamutkrāmatītyeṣa vāva sa prāṇo'tha yoyamāvañcam samkrāmatyeṣa vāva so'pāno'tha yo'yam sthaviṣṭhamannadhātumapāne sthāpayatyaṇiṣṭham cāṅge'ṅge samam nayatyeṣa vāva sa samāno'tha yo'yam pītāśitamudgirati nigiratīti caiṣa vāva sa udāno'tha yenaitāḥ śirā anuvyāptā eṣa vāva sa vyānaḥ // 7 //

The wind that goes up (e.g. breath) is called 'Pran'.

The wind which goes downwards (e.g. flatus passing downwards in the intestine and out through the anus) is called 'Apan'.

The wind that helps in uniformly circulating the elementary nutrients of the gross food eaten by the creature so that they reach the 'Pran' as well as all the organs of the body, thereby giving them nourishment, vitality and strength in basic elementary forms (e.g. proteins, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, vitamins etc.) which can be assimilated by them for their use, is called 'Samaan'. [Hence 'Samaan' regulates circulation and functioning of the internal organs other than the alimentary canal.]

The wind that helps excretion is called 'Udan'. [That is, the wind that produces vomiting and expulsion of stool, throwing of cough etc. is called Udan'.]

The wind that maintains equilibrium and pressure inside the body is called 'Vyan' (7).

अथोपांशुरन्तर्याम्यभिभवत्यन्तर्याममुपांशुमेतयोरन्तराले चौष्ण्यं प्रास्त्रवद्यदौष्ण्यं स पुरुषोऽथ यः पुरुष सोऽग्निर्वैश्वानरोऽप्यन्यत्राप्युक्तमयमग्निर्वैश्वानरो योऽयमन्तः पुरुषो येनेदमन्नं पच्यते यदिदमद्यते तस्यैष घोषो भवति यदेतत्कर्णावपिधाय शृणोति सयदोत्क्रमिष्यन्भवति नैनं घोषं शृणोति ॥८॥

athopāṁśurantaryāmyabhibhavatyantaryāmamupāṁśumetayorantarāle cauṣṇyam prāsravadauṣṇyam sa puruṣo'tha yaḥ puruṣaḥ so'gnirvaiśvānaro 'pyanyatrāpyuktamayamagnirvaiśvānaro yo'yamantaḥ puruṣo yenedaman- nam pacyate yadidamadyate tasyaiṣa ghoṣo bhavati yadetatkarnāvapidhāya śṛṇoti sa yadotkramiṣyanbhavati nainaṁ ghoṣam śṛṇoti // 8 //

He lives very near but at the same time has access to the vast celestial space. He can defeat and subdue within a short span of a moment all his

opponents. The glorious ‘warmth’ (representing life and vitality) that exists between the two extremes (of smaller than the minuscule and greater than the vast) is that ‘Purush’ (the primordial, primary and principle macrocosmic Male aspect of the vast cosmos; or the very life of it, the very vital life-giving and life-supporting element present in the cosmos).

That ‘Purush’ is also akin to the fire called ‘Vaishwanar’. Even at other places in the scriptures it has been said that the ‘Purush’ (i.e. the living Atma or soul) living inside the bosom of the creature is also known as ‘Agni Purush’ (literally the life giving fire, or that authority which has the vitality, strength, powers and potentials equivalent to that of the fire, and who controls the fire element as well). This fire called ‘Vaishwanar’ enables the food eaten by the creature to be digested inside the body (because fire and its heat are required to cook any raw food and make it digestible inside the body).

The subtle vibrations emanating from whatever that has been injected or imbibed by a creature are heard in its bosom (in the form of the heart beat and pulsations present in the veins and arteries, as well as the vital functions of life shown by the nerves). These vibrations transform into sound which is heard when the ears are plugged (closed). When the time comes for the ‘Pran’ (breath of life) to finally leave the body (i.e., at the time of physical death), this sound is not heard clearly (by a dying person) (8).

स वा एष पञ्चधात्मानं प्रविभज्य निहितो गुहायां मनोमयः प्राणशरीरे बहुरूपः सत्यसंकल्प  
आत्मेति स वा एषोऽस्य हृदन्तरे तिष्ठन्नकृतार्थोऽमन्यतार्थानसानि तत्त्वानीमानि भित्त्वोदितः  
पञ्चभी रश्मिभिर्विषयानतीति बुद्धिन्द्रियाणि यानीमान्येतान्यस्य रश्मयः कर्मेन्द्रियाण्यस्य हया  
रथः शरीरं मनो नियन्ता प्रकृतिमयोऽस्य प्रतोदनेन खल्वीरितं परिभ्रमतीदं शरीरं चक्रमिव मृते  
च नेदं शरीरं चेतनवत्प्रतिष्ठापितं प्रचोदयिता चैषोऽस्येति ॥९॥

sa vā eṣa pañcadhātmānaṁ pravibhajya nihito guhāyāṁ manomayaḥ  
prāṇaśarīro bahurūpaḥ satyaśaṁkalpa ātmeti sa vā eṣo'sya hṛdantare  
tiṣṭhannakṛtārtho'manyatārthānasāni tatsvānīmāni bhittvoditaḥ pañcabhī  
raśmibhirviṣayānattīti buddhīndriyāṇi yānīmānyetānyasya raśmayāḥ  
karmendriyāṇyasya hayā rathaḥ śarīraṁ mano niyantā prakṛtimayo'sya  
pratodanena khalvīritaṁ paribhramatīdaṁ śarīraṁ cakramiva mṛte ca nedaṁ  
śarīraṁ cetanavatpratiṣṭhāpitaṁ pracodayitā caiṣo'syeti // 9 //

This Atma, which a personification of that Prajapati (see verse no. 6), has divided itself into five components and is established (i.e. lives, dwells) in the cavernous heart of the creature. It is this Atma which is present in the various forms such as the mind, the ‘Pran’, the life giving energy (called ‘Tej’), determination and volitions (called Sankalp), and the macrocosmic, vast and infinite Soul represented by the sky.

While thus living in a dormant and inert form inside the heart, the Atma remained aloof from the various sense organs of the body. But in that state, it felt bored, unsatisfied and unfulfilled. [It felt that its

stupendous glories and powers haven't shone, and there wasn't any sense in keeping them under wraps, lock and key, as it were.]

So, in order to satisfy itself, it broke through and emerged, sprouted or revealed itself through the five symbolic 'doors' of the body. These doors metamorphosed/transformed themselves into the five organs of perception (ear, nose, eyes, tongue and skin) through which the Atma enjoys the objects of this external materialistic world which try to appease, gratify and please the Atma through the sense organs.

[Now the metaphor of a chariot is used—] The five organs of perception are the 'reins', while the five organs of action (hands, legs, mouth, genitals and excretory) are the 'horses'. The body is called (or is akin to) the 'chariot', the mind is the 'charioteer' and the nature (temperament, inclination, habits, inherent tendencies) of the creature is the 'whip'. Impelled and controlled by the whip, the body moves along like a chariot on a wheel.

In short it is the Atma that has made this body worthy, active, live and conscious or animate. It is the Atma that inspires it and enables it to remain as such. Devoid of the Atma, the body is worthless and loses its importance, value and significance (9).

स वा एष आत्मेत्यदो वशं नीत एव सितासितैः कर्मफलैरभिभूयमान इव प्रतिशरीरेषु  
चरत्यव्यक्तत्वात्सूक्ष्मत्वाददृश्यत्वादग्राह्यत्वान्निर्ममत्वाच्चानवस्थोऽकर्ता कर्तेवावस्थितः ॥१०॥

sa vā eṣa ātmetyado vaśaṃ nīta eva sitāsitaḥ karmaphalairabhibhūyamāna  
iva pratiśarīreṣu caratyavyaktatvātsūkṣmatvādadr̥śyatvādagrāhyatvān-  
nirmamatvāccānavastho'kartā karte vāvasthitaḥ // 10 //

It appears that this Atma has been trapped by the body or has become subservient to it, or is under its spell and influence so much so that it (Atma) gets involved in doing the various good or bad deeds and consequentially gets tied down to their accompanying shackles in the form of rewards or punishments<sup>1</sup>.

This is supposed to be the reason why the Atma has to assume various bodies according to the rewards or punishments of the deeds done by the previous body in which it had dwelled. But on deep thought and contemplation, it becomes evident that the Atma, in its essential, innate and true form and in reality, is indescribable, sublime, subtle and supreme, invisible, beyond comprehension and physical reach, without any attachments, infatuations, passions and endearments, and it is also independent of the three states of existence of the creature (such as the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep state of existence).

Hence, evidently, the Atma is not the mundane 'doer' of deeds, but it only erroneously and fallaciously, out of ignorance and delusions, 'appears to be doing' so. [That is, the Atma is a very peculiar entity; it is not what it apparently appears to be. This appearance of the Atma being a doer is an illusionary conception of the mind; it is a misconception and very misleading about the true identity of the Atma.] (10).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>Since the body itself is supposed to be dead or inanimate and gross, all the deeds that are done by it and the actions taken by it are deemed to be done by the Atma which is the boss and which has infused life into the body enabling or empowering it to do what it has done. The credit or the discredit for the chariot not reaching its destination in a fit and prime condition goes to the charioteer, who in this case of the body is the Atma, and not the chariot. Therefore, the Atma is apparently supposed to be responsible for the actions and deeds of the body as well as their results.]

स वा एष शुद्धः स्थिरोऽचलश्चालेपोऽव्यग्रो निःस्पृहः प्रेक्षकवदवस्थितः स्वस्य चरितभुग्गुणमयेन  
पटेनात्मानमन्तर्ध्यावस्थित इत्यवस्थित इति ॥११॥

sa vā eṣa śuddhaḥ sthira'calaścālepo'vyagro niḥspṛhaḥ prekṣakavadavasthitaḥ  
svasya caritabhugguṇamayena paṭenātmānamantardhīāvasthita ityavasthita  
iti // 11 //

It (the Atma) is particularly and peculiarly pristine pure, uncorrupt, stable, unwavering, uniform, unattached and dispassionate, free from all agitations, restlessness and anxieties, and is like a neutral and dispassionate observer. But it 'appears to be' enjoying or suffering from the results of the various deeds done by it. Besides, it also appears that the Atma has covered itself with a veil symbolising the three 'Gunas'<sup>1</sup> which are inherently present in a creature, driving it to perform various deeds having the elements of righteousness or unrighteousness, goodness or evils in them in different proportions. [All these appearances are misleading because they do not characterise the peculiar and special nature of the Atma.] (11)

[Note : - <sup>1</sup>The qualities are 'Sata' —noble and virtuous, 'Raja' —worldly and normal/mediocre/ordinary, and 'Tama' most lowly and evil.]

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

### Canto 3

ते होचुर्भगवन्यद्येवमस्यात्मनो महिमानं सूचयसीत्यन्यो वा परः कोऽयमात्मा सितासितौः  
कर्मफलैरभिभूयमानः सदसद्योनिमापद्यत इत्यवाचीं वोर्ध्वा वा गतिं द्वन्द्वैरभिभूयमानः  
परिभ्रमतीति कतम एष इति तान्होवाच ॥१॥

te hocurbhagavananyadyevamasyātmano mahimānaṁ sūcayasītyanyo vā paraḥ  
ko'yamātmā sitāsitaīḥ karmaphalairabhibhūyamānaḥ sadasadyonimāpadyata  
ityavācīm vordhvām vā gatiṁ dvandvairabhibhūyamānaḥ paribhramatīti  
katama eṣa iti tānhovāca // 1 //

The sage (Valkhilya) asked again, ‘Oh Lord! If the true nature, the essential form and the intrinsic, innate quality of the Atma are as magnificent, glorious, majestic, stupendous, unparalleled, unimaginable and fantastic like the ones you have described (in the previous Canto no. 2) just now, then is it another entity by the name of Atma that gets shackled to the results (or is affected by the consequence) of doing good or bad deeds, and which wanders in various wombs (i.e. takes repeated births), whether low or high?

Is this Atma, which roams about in different levels or planes of existence, being overcome by happiness and joys or sorrows and suffering, the same as the one you have described to me just now? [Is the Atma which enters the cycle of transmigration—which is subjected to joys and sufferings, which gets tied to the results of actions and deeds—different from the glorious and magnificent Atma you have previously described to me having so many peculiar, magnificent and fantastic virtues? (1).

अस्ति खल्वन्योऽपरो भूतात्मा योऽयं सितासितैः कर्मफलैरभिभूयमानः सदसद्योनिमापद्यत  
इत्यवाचीं वोर्ध्वा गतिं द्वन्द्वैरभिभूयमानः परिभ्रमतीत्यस्योपव्याख्यानं पञ्च तन्मात्राणि  
भूतशब्देनोच्यन्ते पञ्च महाभूतानि भूतशब्देनोच्यन्तेऽथ तेषां यः समुदायः शरीरमित्युक्तमथ यो  
ह खलु वाव शरीरमित्युक्तं स भूतात्मेत्युक्तमथास्ति तस्यात्मा बिन्दुरिव पुष्कर इति स वा  
एषोऽभिभूतः प्राकृतैर्गुणैरित्यतोऽभिभूतत्वासंमूढत्वं प्रयात्यसंमूढत्वादात्मस्थं प्रभुं भगवन्तं  
कारयितारं नापश्यद्गुणैस्तृप्यमानः कलुषीकृतश्चास्थिरश्चञ्चलो लोलुप्यमानः सस्पृहो  
व्यग्रश्चाभिमानत्वं प्रयास इत्यहं सो ममेदमित्येवं मन्यमानो निबन्धात्मात्मनात्मानं जालेनेव  
खचरः कृतस्यानुफलैरभिभूयमानः परिभ्रमतीति ॥२॥

asti khalvanyo'paro bhūtātmā yo'yaṃ sitāsitaḥ karmaphalairabhibhūyamānaḥ  
sadasadayonimāpadyata ityavācīm vordhvām gatiṃ dvandvairabhibhūya-  
mānaḥ paribhramatītyasyopavyākhyānaṃ pañca tanmātrāṇi bhūtaśabdeno-  
cyante pañca mahābhūtāni bhūtaśabdenocyante'tha teṣāṃ yaḥ samudāyaḥ  
śarīramityuktamatha yo ha khalu vāva śarīramityuktaṃ sa bhūtātme-  
tyuktamathāsti tasyātmā binduriva puṣkara iti sa vā eṣo'bhibhūtaḥ  
prākṛtairguṇairityato'bhibhūtatvātsaṃmūḍhatvaṃ prayātyasaṃmūḍha-  
tvādātmasthaṃ prabhuṃ bhagavantaṃ kārayitāraṃ nāpaśyadguṇaughais-  
trpyamānaḥ kaluṣīkṛtaścāsthiraścañcalo lolupyamānaḥ saspr̥ho vyagra-  
ścābhimānatvaṃ prayāta ityahaṃ so mamedamityevaṃ manyamāno  
nibadhnātyātmanātmānaṃ jālenaiva khacaraḥ kṛtasyānuphalairabhi-  
bhūyamānaḥ paribhramatīti // 2 //

That which has been degraded or demoted due to the effects of good or bad deeds done by it, is called by another name of ‘Bhoot Atma’ which is synonymous with the creature. [The word ‘Bhoot Atma’ refers to that Atma which is situated in a perishable gross body made up of the five elements of creation—viz. sky, air, fire, water and earth.]

It roams about in good or bad (high or low) wombs (i.e. it takes birth as a highly evolved creature or as a lowly creature in the heirarchial

ladder of creation), attains a high or low stature, and is subjected to either joys or sorrows in consonance with the combined and cumulative effects of the good or bad deeds done by it.

The five basic subtle elements and the five 'Tanmatras' are collectively called 'Bhoots'. [The five elements are—space, air, fire, water and earth, and the five 'Tanmatras' are the five perceptions of sound, touch, smell, taste and sight.]

A combination of these in various permutations and combinations constitute the body of the creature. This is why this body is referred to as a 'Bhoot Atma' or Atma surrounded by the five elements or 'Bhoots'<sup>1</sup>.

The Atma residing inside the body is like a drop of water on the petals of a lotus flower, but it has apparently become foolish, stupid and ignorant on being defeated and overcome by its own habits, temperaments, inclinations and tendencies, collectively called the various 'Gunas' or qualities as well as the various 'Vrittis' which are inherent to and an integral part of the creature. Surrounded by such a dark veil, which is phantom-like, consisting of these 'Gunas and Vrittis', the creature cannot realise or perceive the supreme, pure essence of the transcendental consciousness residing in its very bosom, and which is the inspiring hub, the driving force and the dynamo for the whole setup.

Hence, inspite of inherently possessing all the good virtues and auspicious qualities, it (Atma) outwardly appears to be sinful, unstable, agitated, fragile, greedy, lustful, passionate, eager, anxious, egoistic and proud. It starts feeling, though erroneously, that 'this is me', or 'this is mine'. It gets trapped like a bird in the net of various faults, blemishes, sins, evils, vices, misdemeanours and other such denigrating and degrading thoughts and activities. Since it gets sucked in this vicious vortex, or is trapped in this vicious cycle of deeds and actions and their incumbent consequences, it keeps on endlessly revolving and swirling in it, wandering in this endless cycle of transmigration which is a result of this innately erroneous belief and grave misconception (2).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The word *Bhoot* in Hindi or Sanskrit means something which is past, is perishable, is a ghost or phantom. This word is very significant in the context of the body of the creature —it indicates that the body of the creature is something untenable, perishable, not real, and every new moment becomes something belonging to the past in the following moment. The Atma which resides in such a ghost-like body is called the Bhoot Atma or the Atma of a ghost-life creature with an illusionary body, or a body that will decay and vanish in due course of time. But it is erroneously treated as being synonymous with the pure and imperishable Atma which has none of the limiting factors associated with the Bhoot Atma. At the same time it must be remembered that the word 'Bhoot' separates these two Atmas —the imperishable supreme Atma of the cosmos and the Atma residing in the perishable body of the creature. A person who realises the difference and awakens to the fact that the 'Bhoot' is a ghost-like body which the Atma has temporarily assumed, becomes liberated and delivered from ignorance and attains emancipation and salvation which are attainable only by enlightenment.]



अथान्यत्राप्युक्तं यः कर्ता सोऽयं वै भूतात्मा करणैः कारयितान्तः पुरुषोऽथ यथाग्निनायः  
 पिण्डो वाभिभूतः कर्तृभिर्हन्यमानो नानात्वमुपैत्येवं वाव खल्वसौ भूतात्मान्तः  
 पुरुषेणाभिभूतो गुणैर्हन्यमानो नानात्वमुपैत्यथ यत्त्रिगुणं चतुरशीतिलक्षयोनिपरिणतं  
 भूतत्रिगुणमेतद्वै नानात्वस्य रूपं तानि ह वा इमानि गुणानि पुरुषेणेरितानि चक्रमिव  
 चक्रिणेत्यथ यथायःपिण्डे हन्यमाने नाग्निरभिभूयत्येवं नाभिभूयत्यसौ पुरुषोऽभिभूयत्ययं  
 भूतात्मोपसंश्लिष्टत्वादिति ॥३॥

athānyatrāpyuktaṁ yaḥ kartā so'yaṁ vai bhūtātmā karaṇaiḥ kārayitāntaḥ-  
 puruṣo'tha yathāgnināyaḥpiṇḍo vābhibhūtaḥ kartṛbhirhanyamāno nānātva-  
 mupaityevaṁ vāva khalvasau bhūtātmāntaḥpuruṣeṇābhibhūto guṇairhanya-  
 māno nānātvamupaityatha yattriguṇaṁ caturaśītilakṣayoni-pariṇataṁ  
 bhūtatriguṇametadvai nānātvasya rūpaṁ tāni ha vā imāni guṇāni puruṣeṇ-  
 eritāni cakramiva cakriṇetyatha yathāyaḥpiṇḍe hanyamāne nāgnirabhibhūya-  
 tyevaṁ nābhibhūyatyasau puruṣo'bhibhūyatyaṁ bhūtātmopasaṁśliṣṭa-  
 tvāditi // 3 //

Even at other places (in the different Upanishads), it is mentioned that the sense of 'doing' anything, or the concept of being a 'doer of deeds' is an imagination limited to the 'Bhoot Atma' (or the creature itself). The Atma which resides in its bosom is most pristine pure and is only concerned with providing the inspiration, the motivation, the impulse, the impetus, the command and the direction to the 'Bhoot Atma'. The 'Bhoot Atma', therefore, is only obeying the command issued to it by the Atma. Hence, the former cannot claim to be a 'doer' because the actual 'doer' is the Atma which has given the necessary instruction and has authorised the 'Bhoot Atma' to do what it is doing. It has given the impetus to the gross body of the 'Bhoot Atma' to act.

Just like an iron smith moulds a piece of iron in any shape he wants by heating it in fire, this 'Bhoot Atma' is cast in various moulds (i.e. is given different roles, designation and honours, and is entitled to perform as many deeds as are expected of it) by the pure conscious Atma by constantly exposing it to the various 'Gunas' classified as evil 'Gunas' on the one hand and noble 'Gunas' on the other, leading to evil deeds or noble deeds respectively<sup>1</sup>.

That is, depending upon the various 'Gunas' it has acquired, the 'Bhoot Atma' goes on circulating endlessly in the cycle of 84 Lakh (1 Lakh = 1,00,000) species of creatures in the creation<sup>2</sup>.

Even as a potter is different from his wheel, the Atma is also separate from these three 'Gunas'<sup>3</sup>.

Again, even as the fire subtly and innately present in a hot piece of iron cannot be beaten when the iron is struck by a hammer, the pure, glorious, glowing and radiant Atma has no faults or blemishes or corruption of its own (when it is hit or impinged upon by the three Gunas which are like the hammer hitting the piece of iron). But since it is in constant contact with the 'Bhoot Atma' (i.e. the creature having a gross body), the faults of the latter cast a dark shadow on the former. The Atma becomes an accomplice to the deeds done by the 'Bhoot Atma' because of its proximity with the latter and their constant interaction with each other

(though the Atma has nothing to do with the Bhoot Atma which is like a mirror image of the 'true' Atma, but is only an 'image' and not the real thing) (3).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The Atma subjects the *Bhoot Atma* to the 'radiation' of these 'Gunas'. These 'Gunas' are the three basic qualities present in all the creatures in different permutations and combinations. These 'Gunas' effect the 'Bhoot Atma' differently based on a number of factors —such as for example, the present status of the 'Bhoot Atma' vis-à-vis its past deeds, their cumulative affects, the caliber of its mind and intellect, the position it occupies in the ladder of spiritual evolution, its willingness to change or subject itself to the effects of such radiation etc..

The concept can be understood differently also. A piece of iron, when heated, shows the heat as a 'red hot glow' which fully pervades the iron piece and becomes an integral part of it. The whole piece appears to be one whole mass of something which is red, hot and glowing. When beaten by a hammer, the iron piece bends and can be shaped into any shape. Each new shape, when heated, will show the same glow of red hot fire inside it. Similarly, the Atma provides consciousness to the creature, making it active and lively, subject to receptions of stimuli in the form of various perceptions originating in the external world and received through the organs of perception present in the gross body. The 'heated' body (i.e., the Bhoot Atma made active by the Atma) now becomes susceptible to change (from the impact of the 3 Gunas) much like the heated piece of iron being hammered by the hammer. The 'hammering' by the three 'Gunas' (the inherent qualities present in every creature) help to cast the individual creature into various moulds or shapes having different characteristics. Even as cold iron is not easily malleable, the creature without the infusion of life injected into it by the Atma is as good as dead and is the least malleable. Here, the allegory is simple — the creature is the iron, the glowing consciousness is the fire, the impinging 'Gunas' is the blow of the hammer, and the Atma is the iron smith.

<sup>2</sup>The *three Gunas* referred to in this verse are the following— 'Sata' which is noble, virtuous, auspicious and good qualities present in a creature, 'Raja' which pertains to worldly passions, desires and ambition etc., while 'Tama' is the lowest and meanest of the three qualities leading to various vices, evils, sins etc.. The permutations and combinations of these three qualities create a particular nature of an individual giving him his individuality and his special characters which are unique to him; they determine his temperament, behaviour, thought process et al. Two individuals having the same external form of the gross body —e.g. two men —might look very much alike but they vary immensely in their nature, habit, behaviour, thinking, outlook, action and deeds, wisdom and way of living. This is what is meant by 84 Lakh species of creatures; it is only a metaphor —it does not mean an actual, countable specific number that there are actually and physically 84 Lakh types of bodies of living beings; it only symbolically refers to the huge possibilities that are possible with these three 'Gunas' and their different combinations that can imaginably produce a myriad variety of creation that can be created with these three basic qualities and their various sub

classes of qualities. {The word ‘Lakh’ means ‘a hundred-thousand’ in numbers. It is a way to say that the thing referred to has ‘hundreds of thousands of variations’.

<sup>3</sup>The wheel of the potter moulds the clay into various shapes, but the driving force of the wheel is the potter. Similarly, the three ‘Gunas’ mould the characteristic of the creature, but the Atma is the authority, the potter in this allegory, who drives the three ‘Gunas’. Just as the potter is not the wheel, the Atma is not affected by the three ‘Gunas’, it is just an instrument, an implement to shape the character of the creature. Again, even as a wheel is needed by a potter to give shape to a shapeless clod of clay, the Atma needs the three Gunas to mould the characters of the creatures that constitute this creation.]

अथान्त्राप्युक्तं शरीरमिदं मैथुनादेवोद्भूतं संविद्धचुपेतं निरय एवं मूत्रद्वारेण निष्क्रान्तमस्थिभिश्चितं  
मांसेनानुलिप्तं चर्मणावबद्धं विष्मूत्रैः पित्तकफमज्जामेदोवसाभिरन्यैश्च मलैर्बहुभिः परिपूर्णं कोश  
इवावसन्नेति ॥४॥

athānyatrāpyuktaṁ śarīramidaṁ maithunādevodbhūtaṁ saṁviddhyupetaṁ  
niraya eva mūtradvāreṇa niṣkrāntamasthibhiścitaṁ māṁsenānuliptaṁ  
carmaṇāvabaddhaṁ viṣmūtrapittakaphamajjāmedovasābhiranyaiśca malair-  
bahubhiḥ paripūrṇaṁ kośa ivāvasanneti // 4 //

Besides, there are indications somewhere else that the body that is created as a result of conjugal relationship (union) between a male and female is devoid of any consciousness and appears to be like hell.

That body which comes out of the aperture through which the urine is also passed by a female, is made up of bones, is packed with flesh and enclosed (wrapped) into a bundle or sac by the cover of the skin. It consist of such detestable things as stool (fecal matters), urine, bile, cough (mucous), bone-marrow, fat, and other such abhorable things that are all stuffed into a bag known as the abdomen.

Besides these, it has other types of dirty and despicable ingredients. It looks as if this body is a treasure trove of all the lowly, dirty, filthy and hateful ingredients that can ever be imagined of (4).

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तं संमोहो भयं विषादो निद्रा तन्द्री व्रणो जरा शोकः क्षुत्पिपासा कार्पण्यं क्रोधो  
नास्तिक्यमज्ञानं मात्सर्यं वैकारुण्यं मूढत्वं निर्व्रीडत्वं निकृतत्वमुद्धतत्वमसमत्वमिति  
तामसान्वितस्तृष्णा स्नेहो रागो लोभो हिंसा रतिर्दृष्टिर्व्यापृतत्वमीर्ष्या काममस्थिरत्वं चञ्चलत्वं  
जिहीर्षार्थोपार्जनं मित्रानुग्रहणं परिग्रहावलम्बोऽनिष्टे ध्विन्द्रियार्थेषु द्विष्टिरिष्टेष्वभिषङ्ग इति  
राजसान्वितैः परिपूर्ण एतैरभिभूत इत्ययं भूतात्मा तस्मान्नानारूपाण्याप्नोतीत्याप्नोतीति ॥५॥

athānyatrāpyuktaṁ saṁmoho bhayaṁ viśādo nidrā tandrī vraṇo jarā śokaḥ  
kṣutpipāsā kārpaṇyaṁ krodho nāstikyamajñānaṁ mātsaryaṁ vaikāruṇyaṁ  
mūḍhatvaṁ nirvrīḍatvaṁ nikṛtatvamuddhatvatvamasamatvamiti tāmasān-  
vitastrṣṇā sneho rāgo lobho hiṁsā ratirdrṣṭirvyāpṛtatvamīrṣyā kāmamava-

sthitatvaṃ cañcalatvaṃ jihīṣārthopārjanam mitrānugrahaṇam parigrahāvalambo'niṣṭeṣvīndriyārtheṣu dviṣṭirīṣṭeśvabhiṣaṅga iti rājasānvitaiḥ paripūrṇaetairabhibhūta ityayaṃ bhūtātmā tasmānnānārūpānyāpnotītyāpnotīti // 5 //

At some other places (in the scriptures), it is also mentioned that this body is full of such 'Tama' category of qualities as follows— attachments, infatuations and passions (Moha); fears and consternations (Bhaya); sorrows, gloom, dejection, grief and melancholy (Vishaad); sleepiness, sluggishness, indolence and lack of attentiveness (Nidra); fatigue, lassitude, exhaustion and lethargy (Tandra); old age and its accompanying debilities and drawbacks (Vridha-vastha); grief, lamentations, woes and miseries of all kinds (Shoka); sorrows, suffering, miseries, wretchedness and agonies, torments and troubles (Dukkha); hunger (Bhukha); thirst (Pyas); poverty, wretchedness, lowliness, meekness and humility (Deenta); anger and wrath (Krodh); disbelief, lack of faith and conviction, heresy and being an atheist (Nastikta); ignorance and lack of awareness of the truth (Agyan); envy, jealousy, malice and ill-will (Matsarya); faults, shortcomings, flaws and blemishes (Vikaar); stupidity, foolishness and idiocy (Mudhata); shamelessness, lack of dignity and self respect (Nirlajjata); arrogance, rudeness, rashness and snobbery (Uddandata); handicaps, difficulties, hurdles, adverse conditions and obstacles (Visham); thanklessness, ungratefulness and showing ingratitude (Kritaghñata); and so on and so forth. [To wit, the creature is dominated by these negative qualities which often overshadow other good qualities that he may possess.]

Besides these, some of the other traits called 'Raja' Guna, which are the medium qualities present in a creature, are the following—worldly, yearnings, desires, longings and avarice (Trishna); love, affections and attachments, infatuation and endearments (Sneha); diseases, ailments and sufferings (Roga), greed, avarice and rapacity (Lobha); cruelty, violence and ferociousness, having no mercy and pity (Hinsa); lust, passions, lasciviousness, licentiousness and promiscuity (Kaam-dristhi); selfishness, exchanges or interactions with others based only on a profit motive, to have vested interest in any such exchange or interaction, business-like attitude where profit or gain is the sole criterion (Vyapar); jealousy and envy (Irshya); unhindered, uncontrolled and unregulated recklessness, restless behaviour, actions and deeds (Swechhachara); agitations, restlessness, inconsistency, freakishness, fickleness and being unsteady (Chanchalta); desires or yearnings to acquire and possess anything, to produce worldly (not spiritual) wealth and enhance prosperity, to make companions, get their affections and honour, be praised by them and oblige them, to seek shelter and help from someone (except Brahm) (Parigraha); the tendency of the sense organs to avoid and abhor things which are not pleasing to them (Anishtha), and yearning, longing and pursuing those objects that seem attractive and tempting to their sense organs inasmuch as the creature hopes to derive self-gratification from them (Indriyartheshu).

With all these flaws hanging round the neck like a millstone and bogging the creature down, the 'Bhoot Atma' gets easily defeated in its endeavours to attain a higher stature for itself than its present standing, to

elevate itself spiritually and to break free from the vicious cycle of birth and death, and to find ultimate liberation and deliverance for its soul trapped in this cycle. The result is that it finds new forms in every new birth (depending upon the thousands of possible forms that result as a combined effect of the various permutations and combination of the above sub-classes of the ‘Gunas’ present in the ‘Bhoot Atma’ as described above in this verse)’ (5).

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

#### Canto 4

ते ह खल्वथोर्ध्वरितसोऽतिविस्मिता अतिसमेत्योचुर्भगवन्नमस्ते त्वं नः शाधि त्वमस्माकं गतिरन्या  
न विद्यत इत्यस्य कोऽतिथिर्भूतात्मनो येनेदं हित्वात्मन्येव सायुज्यमुपैति तान्होवाच ॥१॥

te ha khalvathordhvaretaso’tivismitā atisametyocurbhagavannamaste tvam  
naḥ śādhi tvamasmākaṁ gatiranyā na vidyata ityasya ko’tithirbhūtātmano  
yenedaṁ hitvāmanyeva sāyujyamupaiti tānhovāca // 1 //

After hearing the discourse of Brahma, sage Valkhilya, who was very steadfast in his vows of self-restraint (viz. celibacy), and was very exalted in wisdom and spiritual inclinations, became highly astonished and amazed at what he had been told, at what he had learnt.

But he wanted to learn more, and so he went to Brahma once again and asked him for further elaboration. He requested Brahma—‘Oh Lord! I reverentially bow before you. You are the only one who can give me shelter (i.e. you can give me peace of my mind by satisfying my queries and removing my doubts).

Hence, please explain to me who is the ‘guest’ of the ‘Bhoot Atma’ (the creature) for whom the latter forsakes everything else and endeavours to obtain oneness with the Atma.’<sup>1</sup> (1).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The word *Sayujya* literally means the form of salvation in which the creature’s individual soul merges with the parent, supreme Soul from which it has emerged in the beginning of its cycle of birth and death. This supreme Soul is called the ‘Parmatma’. So, here it means finding rest or merger of the ‘Bhoot Atma’ with the pure Atma residing inside the creature itself.]

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तं महानदीषूर्मय इव निवर्तकमस्य यत्पुराकृतं समुद्रवेलेव दुर्निवार्यमस्य  
मृत्योरागमनं सदसत्फलमयैर्हि पाशैः पशुरिव बद्धं बन्धनस्थस्येवास्वातन्त्र्यं यमविषयस्थस्येव  
बहुभयावस्थं मदिरोन्मत्त इवामोदमदिरोन्मत्तं पाप्मना गृहीत इव भ्राम्यमाणं महोरगदष्ट  
इव विपदष्टं महान्धकार इव रागान्धमिन्द्रजालमिव मायामयं स्वप्न इव मिथ्यादर्शनं कदलीगर्भ

इवासारं नट इव क्षणवेषं चित्रभित्तिरिव मिथ्यामनोरममित्यथोक्तम् । शब्दस्पर्शादयोऽर्थान् अनर्था  
इव ते स्थिताः । येष्वसक्तस्तु भूतात्मा न स्मरेच्च परं पदम् ॥२॥

athānyatrāpyuktaṁ mahānadiṣūrmaya iva nivartakamasya yatpurākṛtaṁ  
samudraveleva durnivāryamasya mṛtyorāgamanam sadasatphalamayairhi  
pāśaiḥ paśuriva baddhaṁ bandhanasthasyevāsvātantryaṁ yamaviṣayastha-  
syaiva bahubhayāvasthaṁ madironmatta ivāmodamamadironmattaṁ  
pāpmanā grhīta iva bhrāmyamāṇaṁ mahoragadaṣṭa iva vipaddaṣṭaṁ  
mahāndhakāra iva rāgāndhamindrajālamiva māyāmayaṁ svapna iva  
mithyādarśanaṁ kadalīgarbha ivāsāraṁ naṭa iva kṣaṇaveṣaṁ citrabhittiriva  
mithyāmanoramamityathoktam / śabdasparsādayo ye'rthā anarthā iva te  
sthitāḥ / yeṣvāsaktastu bhūtātmā na smarecca paraṁ padam // 2 //

Brahma replied, 'Oh exalted sage! It has been said somewhere that just like the swift currents rise in big rivers, the various deeds done by the 'Bhoot Atma' in the past make themselves apparent in its present life. It has to undergo the affects of these deeds (i.e. it has to enjoy or suffer from the good or bad effects of his past deeds).

Again, even as the shores of an ocean are necessary to bring to an end the waves surging and moving rapidly on its surface, death is also imperative and obligatory for the 'Bhoot Atma' (to bring an end to its present cycle of deeds and give it rest even as the shores of the ocean gives rest to the waves and break their chain).

It has become shackled like an animal to the results of the various deeds done by it, and has become dependent upon them (i.e., it has lost its independence and freedom to act as it wills). It appears that the 'Bhoot Atma' dwells in the kingdom of Yam, the patron God of death and hell and judgement. As a result, the 'Bhoot Atma' remains persistently terrified and enslaved (because Yam is a tough taskmaster).

By drinking the intoxicating wine of enjoyment of sensual pleasures and gratification of the sense organs, the 'Bhoot Atma' becomes wild, restless and intoxicated. Impelled and instigated by the ghost of different sins, vices, evils and misdemeanours, it roams about aimlessly, here and there, like an aimless and wayward vagrant. In this way, it suffers as if it is bitten by a serpent. Living in darkness, which is a metaphor for and compatible with the passions for worldly enjoyments which foster it, the 'Bhoot Atma' becomes blind. [That is, by constantly living in darkness of ignorance and worldly delusions, the 'Booth Atma loses its powers of insight to see or discriminate, to contemplate, judge, ponder, think and decide what is good and what is bad. Constant darkness of ignorance kills its sight of wisdom and erudition; it plays havoc with its faculty of sight, as it were.]

Like the spell cast on his spectators by the magician (Indra-jaal), the 'Bhoot Atma' is surrounded by 'Maya'<sup>1</sup> (delusions, ignorance and illusions pertaining to this world). It acts as if in a dream. Like the core of the plantain stem (which has no pith), it lacks substance and a solid core or essence. Like a street-charmer or a maverick dancer (Nata), it dresses itself in new attires every now and then to enchant and please its spectators. [Here, new attires refer to it constantly changing its identity,

characteristic, manners, demeanours etc. in order to keep the world and its inhabitant enthralled by its stupendous and magnificent majesty, pomp, prosperous external looks etc. The creature changes its colours like a chameleon in order to appease the world.]

Like a wall decorated with pictures and paintings, its external features are very charming and alluring. Besides this, it is also said that the various objects of perception such as sound (word) and touch (feeling) etc. are also without any real essence and substance, i.e. they are worthless and hollow.

The 'Bhoot Atma' that is engrossed and entangled in such hollow pursuits of following things which have no material content worth the name, as it were, becomes so benumbed by constantly remaining in a void that it cannot remember even its self (i.e. it forgets who it 'really' is, what is its 'true identity, what is the 'real' destination it ought to be heading to, and that the objects it so blindly follows are nothing else but a 'big black hole') (2).

[Note :- 'Maya' is a word which has two parts, Ma + Ya. The first half 'Ma' means 'to measure, mark off, by any standard; to show, to exhibit, to display; to infer, to conclude; to be formed, built, made of', while the second part 'Ya' means 'this or that'. It means neither this nor that; anything that is not real; that which is delusionary, illusionary, deceptive, mirage like and deceitful, and is caused by the ignorance about its truth and reality; something that has no substance or pith; displays no certainty and leads to wrong inference. The term Maya is used to define all these phenomena. Hence, 'Maya' is a synonym for everything that is deceptive, faulty, false, deluding, and based on ignorance and delusions; all that which has no reality or substance; all that is hollow from the inside though appearing to be lucrative and meaningful from the outside. Therefore, the word 'Maya', as used in the Upanishads, has a negative connotation.

Maya has three basic constituent qualities. Hence it is called 'Trigunmayi', i.e., one which has the three Gunas or qualities. These three Gunas or qualities are—Sata, Raja and Tama.

'Sata' is the most auspicious, virtuous and noblest quality in a man and raises him to a high moral and spiritual pedestal. It marks predominance of righteousness and the highest standards of spirituals and mental evolvement leading to high thoughts, noble actions and righteous behaviour. 'Raja' is the medium quality in a person, and it is marked by worldly passions, desires, yearnings and greed. It makes a man more worldly than spiritual. 'Tam' is the third and most lowly of the three qualities and is used as a synonym for darkness and evil. Obviously, 'Tama' means ignorance, delusions and all the forces or qualities that are evil, mean, lowly, miserly, wicked and base. They pull down a man from high pedestal and virtually dump him in the dust yard of creation to rust and decay.

These three qualities together, in various permutations and combinations, decide the innate nature of a man. The greater presence of 'Sata' makes a man nobler as compared to a high ratio of 'Tama' which makes him wicked, pervert and evil. Various proportions of these qualities will therefore produce innumerable varieties of creatures having different temperaments, thought processes, behaviours, demeanours and mental setup in this world.]

अयं वाव खल्वस्य प्रतिविधिर्भूतात्मनो यदेव विद्याधिगमस्य धर्मस्यानुचरणं स्वाश्रमेष्वेवानुक्रमणं स्वधर्म एव सर्वं धत्ते स्तम्बशाखेवेतराण्यनेनोर्ध्वभागभवत्यन्यथाधः पतत्येष स्वधर्माभिभूतो यो वेदेषु न स्वधर्मातिक्रमेणाश्रमी भवत्याश्रमेष्वेवावस्थितस्तपस्वी चेत्युच्यत एतदप्युक्तं नातपस्कस्यात्मध्यानेऽधिगमः कर्मशुद्धिर्वेत्येवं ह्याह । तपसा प्राप्यते सत्त्वं सत्त्वात्संप्राप्यते मनः । मनसा प्राप्यते त्वात्मा ह्यात्मापत्त्या निवर्तत इति ॥३॥

ayaṃ vāva khalvasya pratividhirbhūtātmano yadyeva vidyādhigamasya dharmasyānucaraṇaṃ svāśrameṣvānukramaṇaṃ svadharma eva sarvaṃ dhatte stambhaśākhevetarāṇyanenordhvabhāgbhavatyanyathadhaḥ patatyēṣa svadharmābhibhūto yo vedeṣu na svadharmātikrameṇāśramī bhavatyāśrameṣvevāvasthitastapasvī cetyucyata etadapyuktaṃ nātapaskasyātmadhyāne-  
'dhigamaḥ karmaśuddhirvetyevaṃ hyāha / tapasā prāpyate sattvaṃ  
sattvātsamprāpyate manaḥ / manasā prāpyate tvātmā hyātmāpattiyā nivartata  
iti // 3 //

Brahma now describes the way by which the 'Bhoot Atma' (the creature) can get liberation and emancipation from the trap in which it finds itself. He said, 'One should employ those righteous means which can lead to virtuousness, nobility, wisdom and enlightenment. One should always adhere to the tenets and principles and follow the sanctioned codes of behaviour and prescribed duties and functions according to the different 'Ashrams' to which one belongs<sup>1</sup>.

Other observances and 'Dharmas' (duties, responsibilities, functions, virtues and attributes) are secondary and inconsequential like the branches of a tree or the shoots of a sapling. Hence, any given 'Bhoot Atma' progresses forward towards success in attaining deliverance and emancipation by diligently, committedly and sincerely observing and pursuing the duties and functions as well as the various virtues and codes of conduct prescribed for it by the scriptures, and not by transgressing them or following other means or paths because they will only lead it to being demoted or pushed away from the point of success.

One who violates the sanctioned code of conduct prescribed and described in the Vedas cannot be called a rightful and virtuous follower of the path leading to liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation.

A person who adheres to and stridently follows the rightful duties assigned to him, the path sanctioned, the codes of conduct laid down, the various virtuous and rightful actions prescribed and expected to be done by him, and acts within the parameters of righteousness and virtuousness, of truthfulness and nobility of thought and action, is indeed doing 'Tapa' (i.e. observing austerity and doing penances, actually and sincerely following religious scriptures and assiduously doing religious exercises).

It is also said that those who do not do (or observe) Tapa, their attention cannot be focused on the Atma. That is the reason why their actions and deeds cannot be purified, cleansed and purged of all impurities and sins.

By doing (or observing) Tapa, one acquires 'Gyan' (truthful knowledge of the essential Truth and absolute Reality behind a façade veiled by delusions caused by ignorance). With the acquisition of Gyan,



the mind and heart can be controlled. When they are leashed and harnessed, one can have access to the elementary essence of existence in the pure conscious Atma, and this helps in liberation and deliverance from the ocean-like world of delusions, artificiality, entrapments, sorrows and sufferings.' (3).

[Note :- 'The life of a person is divided into four segments called *Ashrams* —(i) The 'Brahmacharya' meant for celibacy, self restraint and abstinence from indulgences, a period when the person should be devoted to his studies which would empower him with the knowledge which will help him to prepare to face the competitive world during his adulthood, (ii) 'Grihastha' meant for household duties, procreation, wealth creation, farming etc., (iii) 'Vaaprastha' meant for 'passing the baton to the heirs', renouncing of the world and its responsibilities, and act simply as an observer and advisor to his heirs. In later stages, it also refers to going away to a lonely place after vacating the house for the next generations, and (vi) 'Sanyas' meant for complete breaking away from worldly ties and acquiring total renunciation while doing austerity, penances and other spiritual exercises and preparing for death.

Another connotation of the word 'Ashram' is a 'shelter, a place of dwelling' where wise people live. The Atma or pure consciousness is subtly present in all the five basic elements of creation —space, air, fire, water and earth. So, these are the 'Ashrams' or habitats of the Atma. By saying the Atma should follow the rules of its Ashrams, Brahma means that, for example, the fire should observe its duties and should not interfere with the functioning of the other elements. To clarify —the fire present in the body digests the food and keeps the body warm inspite of the fact that it is in constant contact with its arch rival, the water, which constitutes the bulk of the fluid portion in the body, and neither does this water present inside the body douse the fire which digests and keeps the body warm. Both perform their assigned duties without transgressing or poaching into the other's territory. Just imagine the havoc that would be created if the five elements start violating their sanctioned spheres of action and step on the foot of others —the fire will burn the skin made up of the earth element, the water will douse the fire, killing digestion and making the body icy cold, the air as breath will keep it alive, and in retaliation, the fire will evaporate all the fluid present inside the body. The air (vital winds) would strike back by blowing the fire to extinction. It would be a devastating and a catastrophic development for the creation. So Brahma advises that all the rules and regulations pertaining to a particular 'Ashram' should be rigidly and diligently followed in order to keep the creation regularised and systematised.]

अत्रैते श्लोका भवन्ति—यथा निरिन्धनो वह्निः स्वयोनवुपशाम्यति । तथा वृत्तिक्षयाच्चित्तं  
स्वयोनवुपशाम्यति ॥ ४ क॥

atraite ślokā bhavanti—yathā nirindhano vahniḥ svayonāvupaśāmyati / tathā  
vṛttikṣayāccittaṁ svayonāvupaśāmyati // 4 a //

Brahma has tried to explain the various metaphysical concepts to sage Valkhilya through these ‘Slokas’ (Sanskrit couplets or stanzas which are maxims or axioms of profound importance)—‘Even as a fire subsides when the fire wood is burnt out, the ‘Chitta’ (mind) of a creature becomes calm and tranquil, and it finds rest in the place of its origin once the various ‘Vrittis’ (natural temperaments and tendencies of a creature that pull it towards the delusionary world and its illusionary attractions in the form of objects of comforts, leading to having various desires, yearnings, greed, avarice etc.) are destroyed (4A).

स्वयोनवुपशान्तस्य मनसः सत्यगामिनः । इन्द्रियार्था विमूढस्यानृताः कर्मवशानुगाः ॥ ४ ख ॥

svayonāvupaśāntasya manasaḥ satyagāmināḥ / indriyārthā vimūḍhasyānṛtāḥ  
karmavaśānugāḥ // 4 b //

When the mind has found peace in its original state, it moves towards the ‘Truth’. Then it loses interest in gratification of the sense organs which are under the command of the deeds done by them, and consequentially the objects of pleasures and worldly comfort appear false and illusionary to it (4B).

[Note :- The sense organs referred to here are the five organs of actions— legs, hands, mouth, excretory organs and the genitals. By saying that the sense organs are under the command of the deeds done by them, it means that the relevant deeds would activate their corresponding organs. For example, when the need arises to walk, we use our legs; when the need arises to hold on to something or to write, we use the hand and not the leg; when the need arises to procreate, we use the genitals and neither of the hands or the legs; when the need arises to eliminate waste matter from the body, we use the excretory organs and none of the other organs of action.]

चित्तमेव हि संसारस्तत्प्रयत्नेन शोधयेत् । यच्चित्तस्तन्मयो भवति गुह्यमेतत्सनातनम् ॥ ४ ग ॥

cittameva hi saṁsārastatprayatnena śodhayet / yaccittastanmayo bhavati  
guhyametatsanātanam // 4 c //

The mind is the ‘world’ (i.e. the world exists only because the mind accepts its existence; it is the mind thinks that there is something called world that has a physical existence). For this reason, efforts should be made to purge, cleanse and purify the mind of this fallacious and hallucinating conception (i.e. the mind should be educated and disciplined to realise that the world it erroneously sees as being real and attractive is in truth only a falsehood and most abhorable).

A person gets a destiny which is commensurate with the quality of his mind. This is a universal truth (4C).

चित्तस्य हि प्रसादेन हन्ति कर्म शुभाशुभम् । प्रसन्नात्मात्मनि स्थित्वा सुखमव्ययमश्नुते ॥४ घ॥

cittasya hi prasādena hanti karma śubhāśubham / prasannātmātmani sthitvā  
sukhamavyayamaśnute // 4 d //

When the mind attains peace, tranquility and calmness, then both good as well as bad deeds come to an end. A person whose mind has become calm can concentrate it on his Atma (which is the pure self, pure consciousness of the creature), and it is then that he experiences eternal, imperishable bliss and felicity (4D).

समासक्तं यदा चित्तं जन्तोर्विषयगोचरे । यद्येवं ब्रह्मणि स्यात्तत्को न मुच्यते बन्धनात् ॥४ ङ॥

samāsaktaṁ yadā cittaṁ jantorviṣayagocare / yadyevaṁ brahmaṇi syāttatko  
na mucyeta bandhanāt // 4 e //

The intensity with which the mind becomes indulgent and engrossed in pursuing sensual pleasures and deriving gratification and comforts from the objects of this materialistic world, if the same force and intensity of attachments and yearnings are shown by the mind towards Brahm, then say why can't it get freedom from the fetters shackling it to the sensual objects of this materialistic world? (4E).

मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं चाशुद्धमेव च । अशुद्धं कामसंकल्पं शुद्धं कामविवर्जितम् ॥४ च॥

mano hi dvividhaṁ proktaṁ śuddhaṁ cāśuddhameva ca / aśuddhaṁ  
kāmasaṅkalpaṁ śuddhaṁ kāmavivarjitam // 4 f //

The mind is said to have two states of existence—‘Shuddha’ (pure, unadulterated, uncorrupt, pristine, without blemishes and faults), and ‘Ashuddha’ (the reverse of Shuddha, i.e. that which is impure, corrupt, adulterated, faulty, full of flaws and shortcomings).

The mind that is full of (worldly) desires, hopes, volitions, determinations and ambitions is called ‘Ashuddha’, while that which is free from all desires and passions, known as Kaam, is called ‘Shuddha’ (4F).

लयविक्षेपरहितं मनः कृत्वा सुनिश्चलम् । यदा यात्यमनीभावं तदा तत्परमं पदम् ॥ ४ छ॥

layavikṣeparahitaṁ manaḥ kṛtvā suniścalam / yadā yātyamanībhāvaṁ tadā  
tatparamaṁ padam // 4 g //

A mind that does not dissolve itself in (i.e. it does not allow itself to be drowned or overcome by or submerged in) confusions, doubts,

perplexities, confoundedness, fickleness and restlessness becomes completely stable and steady.

At the same time, when all its desires and yearnings as well as its greed, avarice and rapacity end, it is able to attain the supreme stature of beatitude and felicity marked by bliss, peace and joy (4G).

तावदेव निरोद्धव्यं हृदि यावत्क्षयं गतम्। एतज्ज्ञानं च मोक्षं च शेषास्तु ग्रन्थविस्तरः॥ ४ ज॥

tāvadeva niroddhavyaṃ hr̥di yāvatkṣayaṃ gatam / etajjñānaṃ ca mokṣaṃ ca śeṣāstu granthavistarāḥ // 4 h //

Till the time the mind is not completely brought under control, and its fickleness, restlessness, unsteadiness and its wavering nature are not disciplined, it should be put under a tight leash by the heart. This is the only aim of ‘Gyan’ (truthful knowledge of metaphysics and theology) and ‘Moksha’ (emancipation and salvation, liberation and deliverance). Other things are simply an elaboration of this basic principle by the scriptures (4H).

समाधिनिर्धूतमलस्य चेतसो निवेशितस्यात्मनि यत्सुखं लभेत् ।  
न शक्यते वर्णयितुं गिरा तदा स्वयं तदन्तः करणेन गृह्यते ॥ ४ झ॥

samādhinirdhūtamalasya cetaso niveśitasyātmani yatsukhaṃ labhet / na śakyate varṇayituṃ girā tadā svayaṃ tadantaḥkaraṇena gr̥hyate // 4 i //

The mind whose faults, flaws, blemishes and shortcomings have been removed and rectified by the process of ‘Samadhi’ (a trance-like state obtained in the last stage of meditation) and which has dissolved itself (i.e. merged or submerged itself) in the ‘Atma’ (which is the soul or spirit or pure consciousness of the pure-self), can only experience supreme bliss and happiness. That state cannot be described by anyone with his speech (words), but it can only be experienced or witnessed and accepted by the person’s heart (i.e., it can be felt and realised in his bosom) (4 I).

अपामपोऽग्निरग्नौ वा व्योम्नि व्योम न लक्षयेत्। एवमन्तर्गतं चित्तं पुरुषः प्रतिमुच्यते॥ ४ ज॥

apāmapo’gniragnau vā vyomni vyoma na lakṣayet / evamantargataṃ cittam puruṣaḥ pratimucyate // 4 j //

When two bodies of water, two separate flames of fire and two skies or spaces merge with each other, they lose their independent, separate existence and identity, and instead, they become one whole, seamless, uniform and homogenous entity. [After such merger, one cannot distinguish one entity from the other; no one can say that there were two bodies of water, fire or skies prior to their merger.]

Similarly, when the mind dissolves (or submerges) itself in the Atma (like the lump of salt dissolving in water), the ‘Purush’ (man) obtains what is called ‘Mukti’, i.e. deliverance and emancipation for his soul (4J).

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।  
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्तये निर्विषयं स्मृतमिति ॥ ४ ट ॥

mana eva manuṣyāṇāṃ kāraṇaṃ bandhamokṣayoḥ / bandhāya viṣayāsaktaṃ  
muktyai nirviṣayaṃ smṛtamiti // 4 k //

It is the ‘mind’ which is the cause of, and is responsible for, a man getting tied to the world as well as for his liberation from it.

A mind that is engrossed in, infatuated with and attached to the sensual objects of this materialistic world, gratification of sense organs and comforts provided by the objects of this materialistic world, is the cause of all shackles that tie and trap a man, while a mind that is free from these attachments, infatuation and passions pertaining to the world is said to be free or liberated (4K).

अथ यथेयं कौत्सायनिस्तुतिः— त्वं ब्रह्मा त्वं च वै विष्णुस्त्वं रुद्रस्त्वं प्रजापतिः ।  
त्वमग्निर्वरुणो वायुस्त्वमिन्द्रस्त्वं निशाकरः ॥ ४ ठ ॥

atha yatheyam kautsāyanistutiḥ—

tvam brahmā tvam ca vai viṣṇustvam rudrastvam prajāpatiḥ / tvamagnir-  
varuṇo vāyustvamindrastvam niśākaraḥ // 4 L //

Similarly, sage Kautsaayani has also praised the Brahm in the following words—‘You are the personified form or revealed in the form of the Trinity Gods represented by Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer) and Rudra (the annihilator or concluder of creation). You are Prajapati (the caretaker of the subjects of creation), you are Agni (fire), you are Varuna (water), you are Vayu (wind), you are Indra (king of Gods), and you are Nishakar (moon) (4L).

त्वं मनुस्त्वं यमश्च त्वं पृथिवी त्वमथाच्युतः ।  
स्वार्थे स्वाभाविकेऽर्थे च बहुधा तिष्ठसे दिवि ॥ ४ ड ॥

tvam manustvam yamaśca tvam pṛthivī tvamathācyutaḥ / svārthe  
svābhāvike’rthe ca bahudhā tiṣṭhase divi // 4 m //

You are Manu (the first human male), you are Yam (the death God and divine judge; also the quality of self-restraint of passions), you are Earth, you can’t be degraded or demoted, you are the essential, primary, basic

and fundamental meaning and essence of all metaphysical and theological subjects, and you are present in your pristine, undiluted and magnificent glory in the myriad and diverse forms that the creation has taken (4M).

विश्वेश्वर नमस्तुभ्यं विश्वात्मा विश्वकर्मकृत् । विश्वभुग्विश्वमायस्त्वं विश्वक्रीडारतिः प्रभुः ॥ ४ ढ ॥

viśveśvara namastubhyaṃ viśvātmā viśvakarmakṛt / viśvabhugviśva-  
māyastvaṃ viśvakriḍāratih prabhuḥ // 4 n //

Oh Lord of all the worlds! I most reverentially bow before you. You are the one who is the soul of the entire creation and you perform all the different tasks of this world in your myriad forms. You are the sustainer, nourisher and caretaker of all. You possess all types of 'Maya' (delusion-creating powers), you take interest in all the varied activities taking place in this world, and you are the unquestioned Lord and supreme master of all (4N).

नमः शान्तात्मने तुभ्यं नमो गुह्यतमाय च ।  
अचिन्त्यायाप्रमेयाय अनादिनिधनाय चेति ॥ ४ ण ॥

namaḥ śāntātmāne tubhyaṃ namo guhyatamāya ca / acintyāyāprameyāya  
anādinidhanāya ceti // 4 o //

Oh the one with a peaceful, tranquil, serene and calm soul! I most reverentially bow before you. I revere, honour, admire, glorify and bow before 'him' (i.e. Brahm, the Supreme Being) who is most difficult to be understood, who is beyond thought and comprehension, who is beyond proof, and who is without a beginning and an end!' (4O).

तमो वा इदमेकमास तत्पश्चात्तत्परेणेति विषयत्वं प्रयात्येतद्वै रजसो रूपं तद्रजः खल्वीरितं  
विषमत्वं प्रयात्येतद्वै तमसो रूपं तत्तमः खल्वीरितं तमसः संप्रास्रवत्येतद्वै सत्त्वस्य रूपं  
तत्सत्त्वमेवेति तत्सत्त्वात्संप्रास्रवत्सोऽंशोऽयं यश्चेतनमात्रः प्रतिपुरुषं क्षेत्रज्ञः संकल्पा-  
ध्यवसायाभिमानलिङ्गः प्रजापतिस्तस्य प्रोक्ता अग्न्यास्तनवो ब्रह्माः रुद्रो विष्णुरित्यथ यो ह खलु  
वावास्य राजसोऽंशोऽसौ स योऽयं ब्रह्माथ यो ह खलु वावास्य तामसोऽंशोऽसौ स योऽयं  
रुद्रोऽथ यो ह खलु वावास्य सात्त्विकोऽंशोऽसौ स एव विष्णुः स वा एष एकस्त्रि-  
धाभूतोऽष्टधैकादशधा द्वादशधाऽपरिमितधा चोद्भूत उद्भूतत्वाद्भूतेषु चरति प्रतिष्ठा सर्वभूतानाम-  
धिपतिर्बभूवेत्यसावात्मान्तर्बहिश्चान्तर्बहिश्च ॥५॥

tamo vā idamekamāsa tatpaścāttatpareṇeritaṃ viṣayatvaṃ prayātyetadvai  
rajaso rūpaṃ tadrājaḥ khalvīritaṃ viṣamatvaṃ prayātyetadvai tamaso rūpaṃ  
tattamaḥ khalvīritaṃ tamasaḥ samprāsravatyetadvai sattvasya rūpaṃ  
tatsattvameveritaṃ tatsattvātsamprāsravatsom'śo'yaṃ yaścetanamātraḥ  
pratipurusaṃ kṣetrajñaḥ samkalpādhyavasāyābhimānalingaḥ prajāpatistasya

proktā agryāstanavo brahmā rudro viṣṇurityatha yo ha khalu vāvāsyā  
 rājasom'śo'sau sa yo'yaṁ brahmātha yo ha khalu vāvāsyā tāmasom'śo'sau sa  
 yo'yaṁ rudro'tha yo ha khalu vāvāsyā sātvikom'śo'sau sa evaṁ viṣṇuḥ sa vā  
 eṣa ekastridhābhūto'ṣṭadhaikādaśadhā dvādaśadhā'parimitadhā codbhūta  
 udbhūtatvādbhūteṣu carati pratiṣṭhā sarvabhūtānām adhipatirbabhūvetya-  
 sāvātmāntarbahīścāntarbahīśca // 5 //

This Bhoot Atma—i.e. the Atma of the creature residing in the gross body consisting of the five Bhoots or elements of creation, was lying in darkness (of ignorance) and was unconscious of light before the creation came into being. After that, on being inspired by the supreme Brahm, it converted or metamorphosed itself into the various perceptions of the different sense organs. Further, it assumed various qualities of a creature which are classified into Tam, Raj and Sat (i.e. the lowliest, the medium, and the best quality respectively that are present in a creature. See Canto 3, verse no. 5 for these qualities.)

The pure conscious authority that resides in the creature is a fraction of that supreme authority known as Brahm. But it has limitations imposed upon it because it is only a fraction of the whole and has to observe the limitations of its physical form, its gross physical body (the body of the individual creature). [It is like an Emperor, represented by Brahm, delegating his authority to his smaller kings, represented by the individual Atma of a creature, to take care of a specified, limited area of the entire kingdom. That king represents the emperor and is vested with all the powers and authority of the emperor as far as his domain extends, but not beyond it, for there is another king in that territory with the same powers and authority delegated to him in his own jurisdiction. These kings enjoy all the privileges in their respective dominions as the emperor enjoys over the entire land. This allegory will succinctly describe the relationship between Brahm and the individual Bhoot Atma or the individual creature.]

By the virtue of the pure conscious Atma being present in the gross body of the creature, this Atma assumes some of the characteristic features of the creature (just like the clothes of a person living with someone who smokes cigarette also smells of tobacco smell)—such as it acquires the qualities of having volitions, determinations, ambitions and vows (known as Sankalp), it is enterprising, energetic and vigorous (Adhyavasaaye), i.e. it is firm in its resolve, it is steadfast in its decisions and has a tenacity of purpose and perseverance, it has ego, pride, arrogance and haughtiness as well hypocrisy and vanity (Ahankar). It has a gross body with a gender (Linga—e.g. a male and a female), and is the Lord and master of his subjects, followers, servants, dependants and subordinates (Prajapati).

Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra (the Trinity Gods responsible for creation, sustenance and conclusion respectively) are said to be the best, most exalted and the macrocosmic form or manifestation of the supreme Lord (Brahm). The 'Rajoguna' qualities of the latter (Brahm) are the dominant qualities and characteristic features of Brahma (the creator), who is one of the manifestation of the supreme, transcendental Brahm; the 'Tamoguna' qualities are dominant features of Rudra (Shiva, the

annihilator or concluder); while Vishnu (the sustainer and care-taker of creation) is characterised by the predominance of 'Satoguna' qualities. [See also Canto no. 3, verse no. 5 and note to verse no. 3 for details of these qualities.]

This explains why and how the same supreme, transcendental Brahm has assumed and revealed himself in so many myriad and diverse forms and shapes, such as having the three macrocosmic gross forms (of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra), the eight forms of the 'Vasus' (a demi-God having eight sub-Gods under his command; also refers to the God of gem, wealth, fire, radiance, gold, Kuber who is the treasure of Gods, Sun, water bodies such as lakes and ponds etc.), the eleven forms of Rudra (Shiva), the twelve forms of Aditya (the Sun) and other innumerable creatures of this world.

Being of such a fantastic, magnificent, profound and mysterious origin, and manifesting in equally fantastic, magnificent, glorious and strange revelations, it is present in all the gross forms of the creatures of the world.

It (the Brahm) is present as the patron Lord of all the creatures; it is present both inside as well as outside the creature as the microcosmic and the macrocosmic Soul respectively. It is the same entity that is present both inside and outside, both within and without (5).

[Note:- The reader will note that the article 'the' as well as the pronouns 'he' and 'it' are used while defining Brahm. The reason is Brahm is alternatively used to define the primary Male aspect of creation as well as the primary cosmic energy and the subtle forces of Nature, which we can call the physical forces of nature that govern not only the physical gross aspects of creation but also its subtle aspects as well. The pronoun 'he' is used to define the former aspect, while the pronoun 'it' is used to define the latter aspect of Brahm. It depends on the context in which the word 'Brahm' is used. If it is used to define some abstract quality, certain characteristic feature or traits of the creation, such as the three Gunas which are said to be a revelation of Brahm itself as these virtues as in verse no. 5 above, then obviously the pronoun 'it' is more appropriate. Other such instances are calling Brahm as 'Gyan', 'pure consciousness', 'supreme macrocosmic soul', the 'Amrit (ambrosia of life)' all of which need the pronoun 'it' instead of 'he'.

The instance where Brahm is referred to as the 'first male' —as in verse no. 5 of Canto 2 —then the pronoun 'he' is appropriate. See Canto 5 below also for further clarification on this subject.

Again it will be observed that in Hindi or Sanskrit, the same word often requires the use of the article 'the' before it. For example, the word 'Ganga' —when it refers to the name of a man, it is simply Ganga, whereas if it refers to a river by that name, the famous river Ganges, it is called 'the Ganga'. Further, the word OM which is used synonymously with Brahm is of a neuter gender, thereby necessitating the use of 'it' and 'the'. The article 'the' used as a prefix to Brahm also signifies the unique nature of Brahm as one of its only kind, a Brahm which is specific and not to be confused with anything else. The fact that the divine word OM and Brahm are the same has been enunciated and explicitly stated in Canto 5, verse no. 5 below.]



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## Canto 5

द्विधा वा एष आत्मानं बिभर्त्ययं यः प्राणो यश्चासावादित्योऽथ द्वौ वा एतावास्तां पञ्चधा  
नामान्तर्बहिश्चाहोरात्रे तौ व्यावर्तेते असौ वा आदित्यो बहिरात्मानन्तरात्मा प्राणो  
बहिरात्मागत्यान्तरात्मनानुमीयते । गतिरित्येवं ह्याह यः कश्चिद्विद्वानपहतपाप्माध्यक्षोऽवदात—  
मनास्तन्निष्ठ आवृत्तचक्षुः सोऽन्तरात्मागत्या बहिरात्मनोनुमीयते गतिरित्येवं ह्याहाथ य  
एषोऽन्तरादित्यो हिरण्मयः पुरुषो यः पश्यति मां हिरण्यवत्स एषोऽन्तरे हृत्पुष्कर  
एवाश्रितोऽन्नमत्ति ॥१॥

dvidhā vā eṣa ātmānaṁ bibhartyaayaṁ yaḥ prāṇo yaścāsāvādityo'tha dvau vā  
etāvāstāṁ pañcadhā nāmāntarbahiścāhorātre tau vyāvartete asau vā ādityo  
bahirātmāntarātmā prāṇo bahirātmāgatyāntarātmanānumīyate / gatirityevaṁ  
hyāha yaḥ kaścidvidvānapahatapāpmādhyaḥso'vadātamanāstanniṣṭha  
āvṛttacakṣuḥ so'ntarātmāgatyā bahirātmano'numīyate gatirityevaṁ hyāhātha  
ya eṣo'ntarāditye hiraṇmayāḥ puruṣo yaḥ paśyati māṁ hiraṇyavatsa eṣo'ntare  
hr̥tpuṣkara evāśrito'nnamatti // 1 //

The supreme Lord (Brahm) assumes or reveals himself in two forms of the Atma —the one called the ‘Pran’ (the vital wind force that activates and sustains life) and the ‘Sun’ (present in the sky and sustains life in the world by its life giving energy and light). Both of them were created first, i.e. before anything else came into being.

The Sun represents the external Atma whilst the ‘Pran’ symbolises the internal Atma. By observing its (Pran's) movements, it can be deduced that it is the ‘internal Atma’ of the creature. It is said in the Vedas that this Atma is characterised by constant movement (i.e. it remains in an active and energetic state)<sup>1</sup>.

The erudite and wise person whose sins have been destroyed is said to preside over (i.e. is most senior and superior to) the rest of the creatures of the creation. Such a person's mind and heart are pure and uncorrupt, and he is firmly established or rooted in the supreme, transcendental Atma, i.e. he realises that his true identity is the Atma residing in his bosom, and that this Atma is synonymous with the supreme Atma of the cosmos known as Brahm. His eyes of wisdom become activated, and he remains established in his firm conviction without dithering and wavering. Having established himself in, or having hitched

himself to, the Atma —which is the vital wind or breath of life, coming and going inside his body from the outside —that wise person becomes active like this vital wind (because he has realised that his true identity is the Atma and it is synonymous with the Pran or the vital wind), and he makes his exit to the outside world from the inside of the body, riding piggy back on the vital wind or breath. [For example, a leaf falling in the way of a whirlwind is blown away with it without making any effort on its own.

Similarly, the wise and self-realised person moves out of the body along with the breath, which is called the ‘Pran’ and which is a form of his Atma, when he dies, so that he does not have to suffer the torments of a forceful, unwilling exit of his Pran from the gross body at the time of his death. It is possible to determine or imagine the way the Atma can exit along with the Pran —this is also asserted by the Vedas.]

The supreme ‘Purush’<sup>2</sup> that dwells in the core of the Sun and appears in the form of the Sun’s stupendous glory, magnificent energy, glorious radiance, dazzling splendour and magnificent light and brightness, is the same ‘Purush’ who dwells in the lotus-like heart of the creature and accepts the food offered to it (i.e. the food that is eaten by the creature is symbolically accepted by that divine Purush present in his heart. When we say ‘I have eaten something’, it is actually the Atma or Pran residing in the bosom who has eaten and who is being addressed by the pronoun ‘I’. The fact that Atma is a manifestation of the divine Lord in his microcosmic form is a well established maxim and tenet of the Upanishads. This divine Lord is called the Purush. Hence, it is appropriately said here that the food eaten by the creature is eaten by the Purush) (1).

[Note:- <sup>1</sup>How do we know that the *Pran* moves internally? Well, the word ‘Pran’ refers to the vital wind called breath. This breath constantly moves in and goes out through the nostrils in the process known as breathing. Even if a man is lying in an unconscious state, say under comma or when he has fainted or is under the influence of anesthesia, all the vital external signs of life might disappear, but he continues to breathe. A person is not declared dead as long as he breathes, though his other vital external signs have already disappeared, as he might not be moving his limbs, might not respond to questions, might not bat his eyelids or move his lips. This Pran is not visible externally like the *Sun* in the sky, but is equally important for the purpose of sustaining the element of life in a creature, for even as life on the earth without the Sun shining in the sky is unimaginable, a person living without the Pran inside his body is equally unthinkable and untenable.

<sup>2</sup>There is another interpretation of the term *Purush*. Obviously, the ‘Purush’ in the case of the Sun symbolises the physical forces of the celestial body —the thermonuclear reaction —that keeps the Sun burning, splendorous and active, while in the case of the individual creature, that ‘Purush’ is the biological forces that keep the body warm, active and alive, and helps it to accept, digest and assimilate the food eaten by it. The reference to the heart is also significant because the heart is the only organ present inside the body that pulsates and throbs with energy which we can record in a graph with the ECG machine. It’s

the electrical energy that is the physical side of the Purush present in the creature's heart. This is the reason why the pronoun 'it' is often used to define Brahm who is synonymous with these physical forces of nature besides being called a Purush or the supreme Being who will naturally be called with the pronoun 'he'. See note to verse no. 5 of Canto 4 above.]

अथ य एषोऽन्तरे हृत्पुष्कर एवाश्रितोऽन्नमत्ति स एषोऽग्निर्दिवि श्रितः सौरः कालाख्योऽदृश्यः  
सर्वभूतान्नमत्ति कः पुष्करः किमयं वेद वा व तत्पुष्करं योऽयमाकाशोऽस्येमाश्चतस्रो दिशश्चतस्र  
उपदिशः संस्था अयमर्वाग्निः परत एतौ प्राणादित्यावेतावुपासीतोमित्यक्षरेण व्याहृतिभिः  
सावित्र्या चेति ॥२॥

atha ya eṣo'ntare hr̥tṣuṣkara evāśrito'nnamatti sa eṣo'gnirdivi śritaḥ sauraḥ  
kālakhyo'dr̥śyaḥ sarvabhūtānnamatti kaḥ puṣkaraḥ kimayaṃ veda vā va  
tatpuṣkaraṃ yo'yamākāśo'syemāścataśro diśaścataśra upadiśaḥ saṃsthā  
ayamarvāgagniḥ parata etau prāṇādityāvetāvupāsītomyakṣareṇa vyāhṛtibhiḥ  
sāvitr्या ceti // 2 //

That (life sustaining and life infusing 'energy' known as pure consciousness, that is also known as the Atma or the 'Purush' or the 'self') which dwell in the lotus-like heart of the creature and accepts the food offered to it (i.e. digests and assimilates the food eaten by the body) is also present in the Sun in the sky in the form of the fiercely raging fire in its core (which is the thermonuclear reaction going on in the core of the Sun and which produces the light which illuminates the whole world around it).

The same entity (Purush) is also called 'Kaal' (death, time and circumstance). Though Kaal is invisible, it accepts all the creatures as its food because it devours everything in existence.

'What is this 'Lotus'? What knowledge does it have?' The answer to it is that the 'sky is the lotus', and the 'supreme entity which uniformly pervades it' is the one who is omniscient and all knowing. [The entity referred here is the immanent, immutable, invisible, imperceptible and all encompassing as well as all pervading and permeating Brahm.] It is present in all the directions and corners of the universe uniformly. It is superior to all, most exalted and beyond the reach of anyone.

This 'Pran' and 'Aditya' (Sun)—both of them should be duly worshipped and honoured by invoking the divine and sublime word OM to salute them, and then praise, honour and worship them by chanting the hymns called 'Gayatri Savitri Mantra' incorporating the three words 'Bhu', 'Bhuvaha' and 'Swaha' called 'Vyahriti'. (2)

[Note:- It is said that the creator Brahma had his origin in a divine lotus emerging from the navel of Lord Vishnu, the Viraat Purush. So the Upanishadic sage imagines that the whole sky is that lotus from which originated those first vibrations which were the progenitors of this whole cosmos. These vibrations were the first subtle physical features that

heralded the dawn of a new creation. The vibrations rolled into one another to form a tubular structure like the stem of a lotus flower or the duct of a funnel. At the end of this tube unfolded the vast cosmos like the broad mouth of a funnel, or the fully blooming flower at the end of its stem. The scene resembles the eruption of a volcano, as it were. The fiercely dynamic energy generated by Brahm erupted into the vast cosmos through the symbolic creator in the form of the navel of the 'Viraat Purush'. It also resembles the mushroom cloud formed as a result of a nuclear explosion underground. The core of the lotus was the Brahm, the petals of the lotus was the sky, the revelation of the creative powers of the Brahm was in the person of Brahma who was designated as the creator because the rest of the visible creation was created and controlled by him; he was the regulating authority to decide what to and what not to create, and once created, what it should and should not do. The destiny of the creation and the direction in which it was headed was controlled by Brahma and not by Brahm. That is because the powers of creation were delegated by Brahm in the form of the Viraat Purush to Brahma. At the time when the cosmos ultimately goes out of hand and becomes completely reckless in its demeanours and uncontrolled, pervert, sinful and most obnoxious, the supreme authority, the Brahm, will then wield his scepter of authority and annihilate the world; he would then withdraw the authority that has been delegated to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and consequentially take back into himself what he had let out voluntarily in the beginning. At that time, all the constituent parts of the cosmos will fall back or collapse into that state of nothingness from where it had first emerged.]

द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्तं चामूर्तं चाथ यन्मूर्तं तदसत्यं यदमूर्तं तत्सत्यं तद्ब्रह्म यद्ब्रह्म  
तज्ज्योतिर्यज्ज्योतिः स आदित्यः स वा एष ओमित्येतदात्मा स त्रेधात्मानं व्यकुरुत ओमिति  
तिस्रो मात्रा एताभिः सर्वमिदमोतं प्रोतं चैवास्मिन्नित्येवं ह्याहैतद्वा आदित्य ओमित्येवं  
ध्यायंस्तथात्मानं युञ्जीतेति ॥३॥

dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṃ cāmūrtaṃ cātha yanmūrtaṃ tadasatyam  
yadamūrtaṃ tatsatyam tadbrahma yadbrahma tajjyotiryajjyotiḥ sa ādityaḥ sa  
vā eṣa omityetadātmā sa tredhātmānaṃ vyakuruta omi ti tisro mātṛā etābhiḥ  
sarvamidamotaṃ protaṃ caivāsminnityevaṃ hyāhaitadvā āditya omityevaṃ  
dhyāyaṃstathātmānaṃ yuñjīte ti // 3 //

Brahm has two forms—one 'which has attributes' and the other 'which has no attributes'. [We can also call it 'one with an image or counterpart' and 'one without an image or counterpart'; one which 'can be perceived' and the other 'which cannot be perceived'.]

The form which has attributes, is imaginable and comprehensible, it has an image or shape, which is visible and perceptible etc. —this is not the truthful form of Brahm; it is 'not true'.

On the contrary, the form which has no distinct, defined and visible shape and form, contours, characteristics and attributes, is the ‘true’ form of Brahm— that is, it is the ‘real’ entity known as Brahm.

That which is called Brahm is also the ‘the light; the illumination’, and that which is light is also called ‘Aditya’ (the Sun); it is also OM, the divine and ethereal cosmic sound which is synonymous with Brahm (also known as Pranav), and it is also the ‘Atma’ (the Soul or the Spirit of creation at the macrocosmic level, as well as the soul of the individual creature at the microcosmic level). [This ‘Atma’ is pure Consciousness, and it is at the ‘core’, at the ‘root and ‘foundation’ of everything in this creation.]

It (Brahm) has revealed itself in three distinct forms —viz., the first is OM KAR (or OM), the divine, primordial cosmic sound represented by the symbol ‘ॐ’ which is the name given to Brahm and is also synonymous with it. This ethereal word OM has three letters (A, U, M) and all the elements necessary for creation are deemed to be incorporated in these three letters or syllables. [That is, the whole gamut of creation—right from its beginning through its development and evolvement and up till the end—is included in this word OM.] This is what the Vedas say.

The ‘Aditya’ (Sun) represents the Brahm and its image in the form of OM. [That is, the splendorous and brilliant Sun is a visible manifestation of the glories of OM as well as that of Brahm.]

A person should think in these terms and try to forge a union of his Atma with it (i.e. with the Sun as a representative of Brahm and OM). [The three manifestations of Brahm, therefore, are—(i) the OM, (ii) Sun, and (iii) the Atma of the creature.] (3).

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तमथ खलु य उद्गीथः स प्रणवो यः प्रणवः स उद्गीथ इत्यसावादित्य उद्गीथ एव  
प्रणव इत्येवं ह्याहोद्गीथः प्रणवाख्यं प्रणेतारं नामरूपं विगतनिद्रं विजरमविमृत्युं पुनः  
पञ्चधा ज्ञेयं निहितं गुहायामित्येवं ह्याहोर्ध्वमूलं वा आब्रह्मशाखा आकाशवाय्वग्न्युदकभूम्यादय  
एकेनात्तमेतद्ब्रह्म तत्तस्यैतत्ते यदसावादित्य ओमित्येतदक्षरस्य  
चैतत्तस्मादोमित्येनेनैतदुपासीताज— स्मृत्येकोऽस्य रसं बोधयित इत्येवं ह्याहैतदेवाक्षरं  
पुण्यमेतदेवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥४॥

athānyatrāpyuktamatha khalu ya udgīthaḥ sa praṇavo yaḥ praṇavaḥ sa  
udgītha ityasāvāditya udgītha eva praṇava ityevaṃ hyāhōdgīthaḥ  
praṇavākhyam praṇetāram nāmarūpaṃ vigatanidraṃ vijaramavimṛtyuṃ  
punaḥ pañcadhā jñeyam nihitam guhāyāmityevaṃ hyāhordhvamūlam vā  
ābrahmaśākhā ākāśavāyvagnyudakabhūmyādaya ekenāttametadbrahma  
tattasyaitatte yadasāvāditya omityetadākṣarasya caitattasmādomityanena  
itadupāsītājasramityeko’sya rasam bodhayita ityevaṃ hyāhaitadevākṣaram  
puṇyametadevākṣaram jñātvā yo yadicchatī tasya tat // 4 //

At some other place in the scriptures it is said that the ‘Udgitha’ (the vital wind force of life called Pran or breath which moves upwards, implying spiritual elevation) is OM personified, and vice versa.

The divine, sublime and transcendental entity that was present in the beginning of the creation and which is known or identified by the name of OM KAR, was responsible for the creation of all that exists. [All that exists emerged from that one single primordial entity which was present even before the process of creation started in the beginning, and its name was OM. This entity was called Brahm. That is, Brahm was named OM; the latter was used to denote Brahm; they were synonymous with each other.]

It has a divine name and a subtle, sublime form; it is free from sleep, old age and death —so it should be recognised or known with these five attributes, i.e. (i) name, (ii) form, (iii) no need to sleep, (iv) not effected by age, and (v) that which does not die. The Vedas view it as a resident in the cave which is in the shape of the heart of a creature.

This supreme Soul is personified as OM. Its trunk point upwards and its branches spread out as far as the Brahm (i.e. the farthest recesses of the space or sky, because Brahm is synonymous with sky). These branches are in the form of, or they symbolise, the five basic elements of the creation, viz., the sky, the wind, the fire, the water and the earth. All these myriad substances, things and objects in this creation can be accessed or acquired by simply using this one, single medium or platform. And this singular medium or door is the Brahm. This entire cosmos is nothing else but its manifestation. [To wit, just like all the different branches, shoots, fruits, flowers and leaves are collectively known by the name of a particular tree, the myriad variations in which this creation has been revealed, whether visible or invisible, are collectively called Brahm. The dynamism of Brahm or the dynamism of the cosmic Consciousness is manifested in the form of OM because it is basically ‘sound in the background of the cosmic ether, and sound is a form of energy that though invisible is nevertheless all-pervading, for it permeates in every nook and corner of this cosmos. Nothing is outside Brahm, and nothing escapes Brahm.]

This Sun is also a manifestation of OM (Brahm). Hence, the Sun should always be worshipped using the word OM because by pronouncing this word we would not only be directly addressing the Sun but also, at the same time, involving the supreme Brahm in the process. [That is, the word OM incorporates the glorious qualities of the splendorous, life giving and sustaining Sun, as well as the supreme, transcendental authority known as Brahm.]

The Vedas assert that the glorious majesty, the essential nature and the stupendous potentials of the Sun can be gauged and comprehended, can be harnessed and tapped by this single word OM. This is the divine, holy, sublime, pristine pure ‘word Brahm’, or ‘Brahm represented by a word’. In other words, ‘the word OM is an image of the supreme Brahm’, or ‘OM and Brahm and Sun are synonymous with each other’. A person can get whatever he wishes by invoking and realising the stupendous, magnificent and fantastic powers and potential of this single word OM (4).

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तं स्तनयत्येषास्य तनूर्या ओमिति स्त्रीपुंनपुंसकमिति लिङ्गवत्येषाथाग्निर्वायुरादित्य  
इति भास्वत्येषाथ रुद्रो विष्णुरित्यधिपतिरित्येषाथ गार्हपत्यो दक्षिणाग्निराहवनीय इति

मुखवत्येषाथ ऋग्यजुः सामेति विजानात्येषाथ भूर्भुवः स्वरिति लोकवत्येषाथ भूतं भव्यं भविष्यदिति कालवत्येषाथ प्राणोऽग्निः सूर्य इति प्रतापवत्येषाथान्नमापश्चन्द्रमा इत्याप्यायनवत्येषाथ बुद्धिर्मनोऽहंकार इति चेतनवत्येषाथ प्राणोऽपानो व्यान इति प्राणवत्येके त्यजामीत्युक्तैताह प्रस्तोतार्पिता भवतीत्येवं ह्याहैतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च यदोमित्येतदक्षरमिति ॥५॥

athānyatrāpyuktaṁ stanayatyeṣāsyā tanūryā omīti strīpumnapuṁsakamīti  
liṅgavatyeṣāthāgnirvāyurāditya iti bhāsvatyeṣātha rudro viṣṇurityadhi-  
patirityeṣātha gārhapatyō dakṣiṇāgnirāhavanīya iti mukhavatyeṣātha  
rgyajuḥsāmeti vijānātyeṣātha bhūrbhuvasvariti lokavatyeṣātha bhūtaṁ  
bhavyaṁ bhaviṣyaditi kālavatyeṣātha prāṇo'gniḥ sūryaḥ iti pratāpavatyeṣā-  
thānamāpaścandramā ityāpyāyanavatyeṣātha buddhirmano'haṅkāra iti  
cetanavatyeṣātha prāṇo'pāno vyāna iti prāṇavatyeke tyajāmītyuktaitāha  
prastotārpitā bhavatītyevaṁ hyāhaitadvai satyakāma paraṁ cāparaṁ ca  
yadomītyetadakṣaramīti // 5 //

Again, it is said somewhere else that the word first pronounced by Brahm was OM—it incorporates all the three genders such as the male, the female and the neuter in its ambit. This OM shines in the forms of the fire, the wind and the Sun. It is the Lord in the form of the trinity of Brahm, Vishnu and Rudra (Shiva).

The three legendary fires called 'Gaarhapatya' (which is the first of the legendary 'fires'; it symbolises the hearth in the household, without which the householder dies of starvation), 'Dakshinagni' (the fire which is a witness to charity, donation and alms-giving) and 'Aahawahaniya' (the fire of the ritualistic sacrifice used to invoke the fire God) respectively are its mouth. It is wise and competent enough to understand the Rig, the Yajur and the Sam Vedas.

The three Lokas represented by the words 'Bhu' (earth), 'Bhuvaha' (the sky between the earth and the sun) and 'Swaha' (the heaven) are also one of its myriad manifestations.

That Brahm in the form of the cosmic and divine word OM has three dimensions of time—the past, the present and the future. [That is, it was present in the past, is present now and shall be present in the future. It also means that all that was present in the past, is present now and shall be present in the future are deemed to be incorporated in the word OM.]

The three—'Pran' (the vital wind forces of life), 'Agni' (fire) and 'Aditya' (the sun)—represent its manifest glory, magnificence, stupendous majesty and profound potentials.

The food, water and the moon are the three elements that represent its power to nourish and sustain.

'Buddhi' (intelligence, wisdom, discriminatory powers and thoughts), 'Mana' (mind) and 'Ahankar' (ego, pride) are its three conscious forms, while the three vital wind forces called the 'Pran' (breath), 'Apan' (the wind which moves down in the intestine) and 'Vyan' (wind that maintains equilibrium in the body) are its three vital forces of life.

This is what so many erudite and wise ones have said. The Vedas assert that it (OM) is the one who praises and, at the same time, is the one who offers itself as a prayer<sup>1</sup>.

Oh the one with honourable, righteous and virtuous desires, hopes and aspirations! This Brahm is both transcendental as well as the ordinary, mundane and humdrum. [That is, it is incomprehensible as well as comprehensible, beyond perception as well as perceptible, vast and macrocosmic as well as atomic, minuscule and microcosmic, word as well as the object of the word in nature and form.] This word OM is ‘Akshar’, i.e. it is imperishable and eternal besides being a word. [The Sanskrit ‘Akshar’ has two connotations—(i) a ‘word’ and (ii) something that is ‘imperishable’.] (5).

[Note:- <sup>1</sup>Brahm is the one who prays by using the words of the various Mantras of the hymns of the scriptures, and at the same time it is the word itself in the form of OM that is being offered as a prayer. It is the person who prays as well as the prayer itself! This is a paradox so often encountered while describing Brahm—a seemingly absurd proposition and a self-contradictory statement. But considering the fact that Brahm is not limited by human logic and understanding, the fact that he is both the cause and the end of everything, the ‘unity of these opposites’ is possible and feasible.]

अथ व्यात्तं वा इदमासीत्सत्यं प्रजापतिस्तपस्तत्त्वा अनुव्याहरद्भुवः स्वरित्येषा हाथ प्रजापतेः  
स्थविष्ठा तनूर्वा लोकवतीति स्वरित्यस्याः शिरो नाभिर्भुवो भूः पादा आदित्यश्चक्षुरायत्तः  
पुरुषस्य महतो मात्राश्चक्षुषा ह्ययं मात्राश्चरति सत्यं वै चक्षुरक्षिण्युपस्थितो हि पुरुषः सर्वार्थेषु  
वदत्येतस्माद्भुवः स्वरित्युपासीतान्नं हि प्रजापतिर्विश्वात्मा विश्वचक्षुरिवोपासितो भवतीत्येवं  
ह्याहैषा वै प्रजापतिर्विश्वभृत्तनूरेतस्यामिदं सर्वमन्तर्हितमस्मिंश्च सर्वस्मिन्नेषान्तर्हितेति  
तस्मादेषोपासीतेति ॥६॥

atha vyāttaṃ vā idamāśitsatyam prajāpatistapastaptvā anuvyāharad-  
bhūrbhuvahsvarityeṣā hātha prajāpateḥ sthaviṣṭhā tanūrvā lokavatīti  
svarityasyāḥ śiro nābhirbhuvō bhūḥ pādā ādityaścakṣurāyattaḥ puruṣasya  
mahato mātṛāścakṣuṣā hyayaṃ mātṛāścarati satyam vai  
cakṣurakṣiṇyupasthito hi puruṣaḥ sarvārtheṣu  
vadatyetasmaḍbhūrbhuvahsvarityupāsītānnaṃ hi prajāpatirviśvātmā  
viśvacakṣurivopāsito bhavatītyevam hyāhaiṣā vai  
prajāpatirviśvabhṛttanūretasyāmidam sarvamantarhitamasmiṃśca  
sarvasminneṣāntarhiteti tasmādeṣopāsīteti // 6 //

The expansive revelation of this Brahm in the form of the cosmos is the ‘truth’<sup>1</sup>. Prajapati (Brahma, the creator and the guardian of the subjects of the creation) did severe ‘Tapa’ (observed austerities and did penances) and pronounced the three primary words ‘Bhu’, ‘Bhuvaha’ and ‘Swaha’.

These three words transformed and crystallised themselves into the three formal forms of the gross worlds—the terrestrial world (earth), the sky between the surface of the earth and the sun, and the deep space or



heavens beyond the solar system respectively. These represent the gross, macrocosmic, vast and colossus body of Prajapati.

‘Swaha’ is the head of this body, ‘Bhuvaha’ is the navel (the central part) of the body, and ‘Bhu’ is the foot, while the sun is his eye. All of them are subordinate and junior to him (or they are controlled by Prajapati; they are his virtual servants or subordinates and have to follow his commands).

These entities are a fractional part of any great soul (because a great soul is equivalent to Prajapati Brahma himself).

‘The truth’ is the real eye of this exalted soul. A person can tell about anything and everything only when he sees them with his own eyes. Hence, intelligence, wisdom, discriminatory powers and erudition should be used judiciously while worshipping, honouring and praising the glory of Brahm who is as vast and measureless as to incorporate the entire expanse of the creation, extending from the farthest and deepest recesses of space (Swaha) to the solar system (Bhuvaha) and down to the earth (Bhu).

Further, the ‘food’ is Prajapati personified. [This is obvious because without food life cannot be sustained and propagated.]

Prajapati is the ‘Atma’ of everyone and is also their ‘eye’. He is the one who is the object of worship and adoration; this is also what the Vedas pronounce.

The macrocosmic body which bears the entire world is ‘Prajapati’—everything that exists is present in it, and he is omnipresent, all-pervading and immanent everywhere. Hence, one should honour, adore, worship and revere this most exalted, supreme, sublime and transcendental essence of creation<sup>2</sup>. (6).

[Note:- <sup>1</sup>The cosmos is real in so far as it is a revelation of Brahm and is uniformly pervaded by Brahm. Since Brahm is the truth uniformly distributed in the entire creation, it follows that the creation appears to be the truth because it is infused and soaked by Brahm from all sides. But if we consider any fraction of the cosmos as being bereft of Brahm because of our delusions and misconception about the reality, then to that extent that fraction of the cosmos will be false and devoid of any real essence and substance.

<sup>2</sup>The ‘supreme essence’ here refers to Brahm which has expanded its microcosmic, sub-atomic and minutest of forms by virtue of the cosmic word OM which is the primary sound energy present in the form of the primary cosmic vibrations present in and from the beginning of creation. After this OM next came the three words ‘Bhu’, ‘Bhuvaha’ and ‘Swaha’ symbolically creating the three worlds. These worlds were present inherently in an embryonic form in these words, and in due course of time, they metamorphosed and developed into the physical and visible form of the cosmos as we know it. These three worlds formed the macrocosmic body of the ‘Viraat Purush’ or the vast macrocosmic male aspect of Nature. The Sun became his eyes, the food became his sustenance, and the vital winds became its breath and other life forces of Nature. But if we start going back in the reverse order, we shall ultimately reach that single point, known as Brahm, which was present even before the sound OM had its origin. Prajapati, therefore, is the ‘gross’ form, or a revealed form of that hitherto un-revealed, ‘subtle’

Brahm who was at the core of this huge cosmos much like the atom is at the core of the molecule and a nuclei is at the core of the atom itself.]

तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यमित्यसौ वा आदित्यः सविता स वा एवं प्रवरणाय  
आत्मकामेनेत्याहुर्ब्रह्मवादिनोऽथ भर्गो देवस्य धीमहीति सविता वै तेऽवस्थिता योऽस्य भर्गः कं  
संचिन्तयामीत्याहुर्ब्रह्मवादिनोऽथ धियो यो नः प्रचोदयादिति बुद्धयो वै धियस्ता योऽस्माकं  
प्रचोदयादित्याहुर्ब्रह्मवादिनोऽथ भर्ग इति यो ह वा अस्मिन्नादित्ये निहितस्तारकेऽक्षिणि वैष  
भर्गाख्यो भाभर्गतिरस्य हीति भर्गो भर्जति वैष भर्ग इति रुद्रो ब्रह्मवादिनोऽथ भ इति  
भासयतीमाँल्लोकान् र इति रञ्जयतीमानि भूतानि ग इति गच्छन्त्यस्मिन्नागच्छन्त्यस्मादिमाः  
प्रजास्तस्माद्भरगत्वाद्भर्गः । शश्वत्सूयमानत्वात्सूर्यः सवनात्सविताऽऽदानादादित्यः  
पवनात्पावमानोऽथायनादादित्य इत्येवं ह्याह खल्वात्मनात्मामृताख्यश्चेता मन्ता गन्ता  
स्त्रष्टाऽऽनन्दयिता कर्ता वक्ता रसयिता घ्राता स्पर्शयिता च विभुर्विग्रहे सन्निविष्ट इत्येवं ह्याहाथ  
यत्र द्वैतीभूतं विज्ञानं तत्र हि शृणोति पश्यति जिघ्रति रसयते चैव स्पर्शयति सर्वमात्मा  
जानीतेति यत्राद्वैतीभूतं विज्ञानं कार्यकारणानिर्मुक्तं निर्वचनमनौपम्यं निरुपाख्यं किं तदङ्गं वाच्यम्  
॥७॥

tatsaviturvareṇyamityasau vā ādityaḥ savitā sa vā evaṃ pravarāṇāya  
ātmakāmenetyāhurbrahmavādino'tha bhargo devasya dhīmahīti savitā vai  
te'vasthitā yo'sya bhargaḥ kaṃ saṃcintayāmītyāhurbrahmavādino'tha dhiyo  
yo naḥ pracodayāditi buddhaya vai dhiyastā yo'smākaṃ pracodayādityāhur-  
brahmavādino'tha bharga iti yo ha vā asminnāditye nihitastārake'kṣiṇi vaiṣa  
bhargākhyo bhābhīrgatirasya hīti bhargo bharjati vaiṣa bharga iti rudro  
brahmavādino'tha bha iti bhāsayatīmāṃllokān ra iti rañjayatīmāni bhūtāni ga  
iti gacchantyasminnāgacchantyasmaḍimāḥ prajāstasmādbharagatvādbhargah  
śāśvatsūyamānatvātsūryaḥ savanātsavitā'dānādādityaḥ  
pavanātpāvamāno'thāyanādāditya ityevaṃ hyāha  
khalvātmanātmāmṛtākhyāścetā mantā gantā sraṣṭā'nandayitā kartā vaktā  
rasayitā ghrātā sparśayitā ca vibhurvigrahe sanniṣṭa ityevaṃ hyāhātha yatra  
dvaitībhūtaṃ vijñānaṃ tatra hi śṛṇoti paśyati jighrati rasayate caiva sparśayati  
sarvamātmā jānīteti yatrādvaitībhūtaṃ vijñānaṃ kāryakāraṇanirmuktaṃ  
nirvacanamanaupamyam nirupākhyam kiṃ tadaṅga vācyam // 7 //

The first part of the Gayatri Mantra is 'TATSAWITURWARNAYAM'—this word represents the 'light' of the Sun (i.e., its rays) which is also called 'Savita'. This Savita/Sun is the causative factor for the birth of all the creatures in this world. [This is a very obvious statement because we can all imagine what will happen to life on the planet should the sun stop shining.] Coming to terms with this fact, those who are eager to pursue the knowledge of the essence of the Atma (the real and truthful living entity inside the otherwise dead and inane creature) should strive to attain or realise it (i.e., understand the essential metaphysical meaning behind the worship of the Sun).

The next part of the Savitri or Gayatri Mantra is 'BHARGO DEVASYA DHIMAHİ'. The word 'Bharg'<sup>1</sup> means the 'radiance, splendour, light and glory' of the Sun. This 'Bharg' symbolises the light

of knowledge, enlightenment, erudition and wisdom. Those seeking the knowledge of Brahm often ask ‘what shall we contemplate upon?’ The answer is that they should seek that splendid and glorious knowledge that would make them as potential and powerful as the Sun.

The next part of the Gayatri Mantra is ‘DHIYO YO NAHA PRACHODAYAT’. Here, intelligence and discrimination faculty of the mind is called ‘Dhi’.

Hence, this phrase means ‘that which inspires our mind, activates our intelligence, empowers our discriminatory powers and wisdom, and drives us towards righteous, noble, virtuous and spiritually uplifting path’.

‘Bharg’ or ‘the glorious, radiant light’ is that which is present in the Sun; it is also present in the ‘eye’ of the individual creature (with which it sees the world, because the sun resident in the eye illuminates the world for the Atma, which is the truthful pure-self, and enables it to see the world outside). Because of this light, a man is able to see, observe, witness, learn and move in the correct direction. (Otherwise, he would be like a blind man moving down a blind and dark alley). Or, it helps him to help others to see, learn and move in the correct direction (because only a person who knows about the topography of any place can direct others to their destination correctly). Another interpretation of the word ‘Bharg’ is as follows —the letter ‘Bha’ means ‘one who lights or illuminates the world’, the letter ‘Ra’ means ‘the one who give pleasure and comfort to all the creatures’ as in the divine liberation-providing Tarak Mantra ‘Rang’ or ‘Ram’, and the letter ‘Ga’ means ‘one who regulates the movements of all the creatures in the cycle of birth and death (transmigration)’. The three letters combine to form the word ‘Bharg’. The word also refers to Rudra (Lord Shiva) in this context (because Shiva has all these qualities or virtues in him). He is treated as being synonymous with Brahm, and also the annihilator of the world, thereby regulating its cycle of birth and death.

The various connotations for the synonyms used for the ‘Sun’ are described now—it is called the ‘Sun’ because it continuously ‘delivers’ (i.e. gives birth to new life and sustains as well as nourishes it). [The word ‘delivers’ also signifies the magnanimity and benevolence of the Sun to deliver all the essential requirements of life and maintains all the necessary physical balances on this earth that foster life.] It is called ‘Savita’ because it ‘creates or originates’ everything that exists. [Surely one can imagine the fate of the world if there was no sun; there would be the cosmic dance of death and destruction.]

It is called ‘Aditya’ because ‘it gives light to the world’. It is also called ‘Pawamaan’ because ‘it makes everything holy and pure’, i.e. it shines its light brightly on everything and removes the various darkness, faults and flaws of this creation. [At the same time, the sunlight helps to kill germs and is very important to produce so many essential elements, the common examples being vitamin D in the body, the process of photosynthesis in the plants and the elimination of so many toxic microbes that cannot survive in the rays of the sunlight; hence, the quality of ‘making things holy and sanctified’. It also helps to kill inimical and malignant creatures such as the various germs, bacteria, viruses which

cause impurity in the atmosphere causing harm to other creatures. Hence the quality to purify and cleanse is also a virtue of the sun].

The Sun is referred to as 'Aditya' also because it moves benignly for the benefit of all the creatures and is their shelter and a provider of their succour.

It (the Sun) symbolises the 'Atma'; it is like the Atma! It is, as Atma, also called 'Amrit' which is the elixir or ambrosia of life, bliss and eternity (because as long as the sun shines, the life on the planet can be perpetuated to infinity, and as soon as the sun would be exhausted of its fuel in the future and there will be no sun shine, the life on earth would come to an end). It (Atma) is all-knowing and omniscient, it contemplates and thinks, it moves, it creates, it gives (and receives) bliss, happiness and joy, it speaks itself, it tastes, it smells, it touches, it pervades the whole body (in the form of the 5 vital winds described above), and it is bestowed with sweetness and pleasant demeanours —this is indeed what the Vedas say (about the Atma and the Sun).

The school of thought that believes in 'duality' (distinction between the creature and the supreme Brahm) treats the entity that hears, sees, smells, tastes and touches (through the five organs of perception in the body) as the Atma, soul or spirit of the creature which is distinct from Nature. You must understand this.

Where the creature's understanding and mental caliber rises higher and it believes in 'non-duality' (that there is no distinction between the Atma of the creature and the supreme Atma of the cosmos), the various distinctive perceptions lose their relevance and independent existence. This is a state which goes beyond the purview of 'cause and effect', is beyond the powers of comprehension and explanation, is free from all attributes, and is beyond definitions. This is that magnificent, glorious and stupendous energy called 'Bharg-Shakti' about which nothing can be said in words (7).

[Note :- (i) 'The word *Bharg* in the last line of this verse means the splendour, glory, radiance, energy and powers of the Sun. It also means light, brilliance, illumination and dazzle. So the phrase 'Bharg Shakti' refers to the stupendous powers of the Sun which are praised in this canto earlier as a visible manifestation of OM and Brahm (verse no. 1-4), and then as Gayatri or Savitri (in verse no. 7). However, verse no. 5-7 elaborately describes the meaning of the 'Gayatri or Savitri Mantra' with its relevance to the Sun. It will be noted that the Sun has been treated as a visible manifestation of the stupendous and magnificent powers and glory of Brahm by the Upanishadic sage. Obviously, while searching for a physical form or body which could fit into the definition of Brahm from all the visible things seen or observed in this creation —one having dazzling splendour, one who is self illuminated one who regulates life, one who has the powers to germinate life as well as to destroy it, one who lights the worlds, one who is beyond reach, and one without which nothing can survive —the sage found the Sun as the fittest and the most eligible candidate to fit in the profile of Brahm, to 'suit the bill', as it were. But we must remember that while apparently honouring the Sun as a physical entity that is a harbinger of life, making it akin to Brahm, an entity that sustains and nourishes life on earth, making it akin to Vishnu,

and which can annihilate life (as in the case of severe drought brought on by the scorching, harsh sun which dries up the land by its relentless heat, and the sizzling heat of the desert as well the current talk of the global warming when the heat of the sun would melt all the glaciers and cause the rivers to dry up), making it akin to Shiva, the annihilator, the Upanishadic sage/seer sees more than a physical gross body in the Sun shining in the sky. He sees more to the Sun, from being a mere physical body shining in the sky, to being a visible representative of the supreme, transcendental Brahm. He treats the Sun in a metaphysical term, he sees it as a synonym of Brahm, as a metaphor for Brahm from whom the whole creation has emerged, as having stupendous splendour, majesty and glory, as being the source of light which stands for knowledge and wisdom (as opposed to darkness which stand for ignorance and delusions), as being the Atma or soul of the creation, and as being the entity which moves and pulsates with the all-important life giving vital energy. Since the Sun only gives and does not demand anything in return, it is also akin to Brahm who is very benevolent, benign and magnanimous. It is not a mere globe of fire in the sky, but a visible manifestation of Brahm for the Upanishadic sage.

(ii) The famous Gayatri Mantra is a hymn in honour of Brahm composed in the typical style of a 'Anushtup Chanda'. That Mantra is the following, 'OM BHURBHUVAHA SVAHA<sup>1</sup>, TATSAVIURVARENYAM<sup>2</sup>, BHARGO DEVASYA DHIMAH<sup>3</sup>, DHIYO YO NAH PRACODAYAT<sup>4</sup>'. It means 'OM is the supreme, transcendental Brahm. He is the lord of creation of the terrestrial, the celestial and heavenly worlds. That Brahm is luminous like the sun. He is excellent, the best, the most exalted, a destroyer of sins, and a divine entity. May he imbibe, infuse and inspire our intellect with wisdom and enlightenment so that we are purified and move on the righteous and noble path'. The 4 phrases of the Gayatri Chanda are clearly marked by small numerals in this Mantra. This Mantra appears in the Rig Veda (3/62/10), the Sam Veda (1462), and Yajur Veda (3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/6).

(iii) There are 24 Rishis of Gayatri Mantra. They are the following— Vamdev, Atri, Vashistha, Shukra, Kanva, Parashar, Vishwamitra, Kapil, Shaunk, Yagyawalkya, Bharadwaj, Jamdagni, Gautam, Mudgal, Veda Vyas, Lomas, Agstya, Kaushik, Vatsa, Pulastya, Manduka, Durvasa, Narad and Kshyap.

The 24 Chandas (metres) of Gayatri Mantra are the following— Gayatri, Ushnik, Anushtup, Vrihati, Pankti, Trishtup, Jagati, Ati Jagati, Shakvari, Ati Shakvari, Dhriti, Ati Dhriti, Viraat, Prastarapankti, Kriti, Prakriti, Akriti, Vikriti, Sankriti, Aksarapankti, Bhu, Bhuvaha, Swaha and Jyotismati.

There are 24 Devtas (Gods or patron deities) of Gayatri Mantra. They are the following— Aagneya, Prajapati, Saumyam, Ish, Savitri, Aditya, Bhrishapti, Maitravarun, Bhagdaivatya, Aryamaishvar, Ganesh, Twastra, Paushna, Indra, Vayu, Vamdeo, Maitra Varunidaiv, Vaishvadev, Matrik, Vaishnav, Vasu Dev, Rudra Dev, Kuber and Ashwini.

The 24 Shaktis (divine powers or the female aspects of creation) of Gayatri Mantra are the following— Vaamdevi, Priya, Satya, Vishva,

Bhadravilasini, Prabhawati, Jaya, Santa, Kanthaa, Durga, Saraswati, Vidruma, Vishlesa, Vyapini, Vimla, Tamopaharini, Sukhma, Vishwa-yoni, Jaya-vasa, Padmalya, Paraa, Sobha, Bhadra and Tripada.

The 24 Varnas (colours or shades) of Gayatri Mantra are the following — Campakam (yellow), Atasi (hemp), Vidrum (coral), Sphatik (crystal), Padam (lotus), Tarun-aditya (rising sun-red), a mixture of Shankha (conch), Kunda (white jasmine) and Indu (moon), Pravaal Padma (red-lotus), Padmaraga (emerald), Indranilamani (sapphire), Mukta (pearl), Kumkum (red power), Anjam (collyrium-black), Rakta (blood red), Vaidurya, Ksaudra (champa; yellow), Haldi (turmeric yellow), Kunda Dugdha (white as jasmine), Ravikanthi (sun-white), Shukpuccha (a tail of a parrot), Shat-patra (white lotus), Ketaki (light yellow), Mallika and Karavira.

The 24 Tattvas (essence, elements) of Gayatri Mantra are the following— earth, water, fire, air, space (called the 5 Mahabhuts), smell, taste, vision, sound, touch (called the 5 Tanmatras), generative organ, excretory organ, feet, hand, mouth (called 5 organs of action), nose, tongue, eyes, skin, ear (called 5 organs of perception), Pran, Apan, Vyan and Saman (called vital airs).

The 24 Mudras (postures) of Gayatri Mantra are the following— Sumukham and Samputam, Vitatam and Vistrutam, Dwimukham and Trimukham, Chaturmukham and Panchmukham, Sanmukham, Adhomukham, Vyapakanajalikam, Shakatam, Yampasham, Sanmukho-mukham, Vilambam, Mustikam (closed fist), Matsyam (fish like), Kurmam (tortoise), Varahakam (boar like), Singhkrantham (lion like), Mahakrantham (a great lion like), Mudgar (Pelion like), Pallavam, Trishulyoni (trident like), Surabhi (cow like), Akshamala, Lingakam (phallus like) and Ambujam (blue lotus). See also Chandogyo-panishad, canto 3, section 12, verse no. 1 (note).]

एष हि खल्व्वात्मेशानः शंभुर्भवो रुद्रः प्रजापतिर्विश्वसृष्टिरण्यगर्भः सत्यं प्राणो हंसः शास्ता  
विष्णुर्नारायणोऽर्कः सविता धाता सम्राडिन्द्र इन्दुरिति य एष तपत्यग्निना पिहितः सहस्राक्षेण  
हिरण्मयेनानन्देनैष वाव विजिज्ञासितव्योऽन्वेष्टव्यः सर्वभूतेभ्योऽभयं दत्त्वारण्यं गत्वाथ बहिः  
कृतेन्द्रियार्थान्स्वशरीरादुपलभतेऽथैनमिति विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम्  
। सहस्ररश्मिः शतधा वर्तमानः प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः ॥८॥

eṣa hi khalvātmeśānaḥ śambhurbhavo rudraḥ prajāpatirviśvasṛṅkirāṇya-  
garbhaḥ satyaṃ prāṇo haṃsaḥ śānto viṣṇurnārāyaṇo'rkaḥ savitā dhātā  
samrāḍindra induriti ya eṣa tapatyagninā pihitaḥ sahasrākṣeṇa  
hiraṇmayenānandenaiṣa vāva vijijñāsitavyo'nveṣṭavyaḥ sarvabhūtebhyo-  
'bhayaṃ dattvāraṇyaṃ gatvātha bahiḥkṛtendriyārthānsvaśarīrādupalabhate-  
'thainamiti viśvarūpaṃ hariṇaṃ jātavedasaṃ parāyaṇaṃ jyotirekaṃ  
tapantaṃ / sahasraraśmiḥ śatadhā vartamānaḥ prāṇaḥ prajānāmudayatyeṣa  
sūryaḥ // 8 //

‘This’ entity is the Atma which is a controller of everything, is the Lord God, is Shiva (meaning enlightenment, auspiciousness), Bhava

(representing delusion of the world), Rudra (symbolising anger and vehemence), Prajapati (the creator and guardian of the world), 'Hiranyagarbh' (the macrocosmic subtle body of creation), the absolute Truth and Reality called 'Sat', 'Pran' (breath; vital winds), 'Hans' (the divine swan symbolically said to be present in the heart; the word also refers to wisdom, discrimination and intelligence), the preacher and teacher (Guru), Vishnu (the sustainer and protector), Narayan (a provider of emancipation; another name of Vishnu), 'Arka' (essence, extract, juice and nectar), Savita (Sun), 'Dhata' (mother, sustainer, protector and bearer), Emperor (Lord of the entire creation inclusive of Gods), Indra (king of Gods) and the Moon (a treasury of ambrosia of bliss, peace, tranquillity and happiness)—all of these are the various manifestations of Atma.

It is also known as the fire of 'Tapa' (the glory and potentials of severe austerities, penances and keeping religious vows) as well as the powers of the thousands of eyes to see. It is full of supreme bliss, beatitude, felicity and joys, and it is the only entity worth knowing. A seeker should bless all others with the blessing of fearlessness and himself go to the forest (i.e., he should retire to a lonely, secluded and serene place) in order to contemplate upon that OM. [Here, OM is treated as being equivalent to Brahm, which in turn is akin to the macrocosmic soul of the creation, and finally to the gross body in the form of the glorious Sun shining in the sky and its image in the form of the Atma inside the bosom of the individual creature. This Atma is pure conscious and a microcosmic form of Brahm or OM. The faculty of speech is a visible manifestation of OM, the faculty of sight is that of the Sun, while the 'Pran' is of the Brahm. See also verse nos. 1-6]

Those persons who forsake gratification of the sense organs and enjoyment of pleasures derived from the materialist objects of the world, they are able to get this essential light and energy sprouting from inside their bosom. [That is, by self restraint and austerity, a seeker/aspirant accumulates spiritual energy within himself. This energy is like the energy that keeps the Sun burning in the sky.]

This enlightened entity (Atma as an image of the Sun) is an image of the world, is pleasant and charming, is the most wise and erudite amidst those who take birth in this world, is the supreme and ultimate shelter and refuge of all, and is self illuminated and radiant with a glorious and brilliant light. This 'Sun' (Atma)<sup>1</sup> is endowed with thousands of glittering rays of light emanating and radiating out from it. It is present in the world in so many symbolic ways. It rises like the very vitality and life of all the subjects and the creations at large (8).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The *Sun* has been likened to the supreme Lord of the creation. An entire Upanishad deals with the subject of the Gayatri and Savita as well as the Sun, and it is called Savitru-panishad. It is the 13<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition.]

### (2.3) Maitreyu-panishad:

This Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition has 3 Cantos primarily dealing with the perishable and impermanent nature of the human body, with what is known as the essential truth of existence, i.e. the 'Atma', with what is true Sanyas or renunciation, and how it leads to emancipation, and finally, with what a truly realised person feels, experiences and says.

Canto 1 is a dialogue between king Brihadrath who, having realised the perishable nature of his body, became disillusioned with it and the surrounding world with which the body interacts or is related to. He crowned his elder son and went to the forest. There he did severe penances and austerities (Tapa). Impressed by it and his sincerity of purpose, the great sage Shakayanya came to bless him. On the king's persistence, the sage told him about the despicable and perishable nature of the human body; he preached him on the supremacy and imperishable nature of the Atma and the Brahm whom the Atma represents as well as how to realise or attain the awareness of that essential truth.

Canto 2 is a conversation between sage Maitreya and Lord Shiva in which the various aspects of Sanyas, which is a life of complete renunciation and dispassion towards the world and its objects, are discussed. It opens by describing the abhorable nature of the gross body of a creature, and once one begins to loathe it, it goes on to highlight that true renunciation will lead to emancipation and salvation. The verses in this Canto have direct, almost verbatim parallels in the holy Bible. Selected quotations from the Bible have been added to the verses as footnotes for ready reference and which would add a special fragrance and flavour to the text.

The magnificent views expressed in this Upanishad find a parallel in another classical Sanskrit composition called Vairagya Shatakam by renunciate king Bhartrihari of ancient India who lived during the Golden Age (320 A.D.—544 A.D.). He was the elder brother of the legendry king Vikramaditya of Ujjain and belonged to the famous Gupta dynasty. Disillusioned by this materialistic world of sensual enjoyment, he took to Sanyas and was formally initiated by Guru Gorakhanath. As a Yogi (ascetic), Bhartrihari wrote beautiful verses on asceticism, peace of the inner-self, self realisation, importance of meditation and, more importantly, the futility of worldly pursuits and the importance of Sanyas or renunciation.

Canto 3 is one which describes how and what a self-realised person, who has become aware of the true essence of the Atma and Brahm, feels like, experiences and talks. When such a person talks about himself with the pronoun 'I' or 'Me', he is not haughty, arrogant or egoist, but he is instead talking about his true and pure self which is not proud or egoist, is distinct from the body which is erroneously regarded by the mediocre, mundane world and its inhabitants as the identity of that individual. The typical language of opposites, oxymoron, apparent paradoxes and incompatibles is used in this Canto to describe the nature, form and



characteristic feature of the Atma as an image or an embodiment or a fraction of the supreme, transcendental Brahm, who is the soul of the entire cosmos. The use of ‘opposites’ indicates that Brahm embraces everything in this creation.

### Canto 1

ॐ बृहद्रथो वै नाम राजा राज्ये ज्येष्ठं पुत्रं निधापयित्वेदमशाश्वतं मन्यमानः शरीरं  
वैराग्यमुपेतोऽरण्यं निर्जगाम । स तत्र परमं तप आस्थायादित्यमीक्षमाण  
ऊर्ध्वबाहुस्तिष्ठत्यन्ते सहस्रस्य मुनेरन्तिकमाजगामाग्निरिवाधूमकस्तेजसा  
निर्दहन्निवात्मविद्भगवाञ्छकायन्य उत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ वरं वृणीष्वेति राजानमब्रवीत्स तस्मै  
नमस्कृत्योवाच भगवन्नाहमात्मवित्त्वं तत्त्वविच्छ्रणुमो वयं स त्वं नो ब्रूहीत्येतद्धृतं  
पुरस्तादशक्यं मा पृच्छ प्रश्नमैक्ष्वाकान्यान्कामान्वृणीष्वेति शाकायन्यस्य  
चरणावभिमृश्यमानो राजेमां गाथां जगाद ॥१॥

om bṛhadratho vai nāma rājā rāje jyeṣṭhaṁ putraṁ nidhāpayitvedama-  
śāśvataṁ manyamānaḥ śarīraṁ vairāgyamupeto'raṇyaṁ nirjagāma / sa tatra  
paramaṁ tapa āsthāyādityamīkṣamāṇa ūrdhvbāhustīṣṭhatyante sahasrasya  
munerantikamājagāmāgnirivādhūmakastejasā

nirdahannivātmavid-bhagavāñchākāyanya uttiṣṭhottīṣṭha varam vṛṇīśveti  
rājānamabravītsa tasmai namaskṛtyovāca bhagavannāhamātmavittvaṁ  
tattvavicchrṇumo vayaṁ sa tvaṁ no brūhītyetadvṛttaṁ purastādaśakyaṁ mā  
pṛccha praśnamaikṣvā-kānyānkāmānvṛṇīśveti śākāyanyasya  
caraṇāvabhimṛśyamāno rājemāṁ gāthāṁ jagāda // 1 //

A king named Brihadrath developed a sense of profound renunciation when he acquired wisdom strong enough to realise the perishable, decayable or mortal, transient and temporary nature of his body. That is why he gave the reign of the kingdom to his eldest son and went to the forest. There he did severe ‘Tapa’ (penance and austerity with the accompanying hardship and endured all of it with resilience) for a long time. Daily he used to look towards the Sun and kept standing with his hands stretched upwards towards it (in a form of prayer and as a mark of paying tributes and obeisance to the Sun). After a period of 1000 years of doing severe ‘Tapa’ and as a result (or blessing or reward) of it, a self-realised, erudite, wise and enlightened sage named Shakayanya, who was an expert and well-versed in the knowledge of the Atma (soul/spirit), came to him. The sage had a glowing spiritual radiance about him that resembled the brilliance of fire which has no smoke. That exalted sage said to the king, ‘Oh king! Get up and ask for a boon or blessing’.

The king bowed reverentially before the sage and said, ‘Oh Lord! I am not an expert in the knowledge of the Atma; I have heard that you are well versed in the knowledge of Brahm and have deep insight into the

essential aspects and principles governing it. Hence, bless me with a boon of truthful knowledge of that absolute Truth and universal Reality’.

Hearing this, the exalted sage replied, ‘Oh the king of the Ikshwaku clan! Ask for some other boon. Do not ask such question which have been traditionally regarded as being very difficult to answer from ancient times’.

Hearing this, king Brihadrath bowed at the feet of the exalted sage Shakayanya and said as follows— (1).

[Note :- This verse is exactly the same as verse no. 1 of Maitrayanu-panishad.]

अथ किमेतैर्वान्यानां शोषणं महार्णवानां शिखरिणां प्रपतनं ध्रुवस्य प्रचलनं स्थानं वा तरूणा निमज्जनं पृथिव्याः स्थानादपसरणं सुराणां सोऽहमित्येतद्विधेऽस्मिन्संसारे किं कामोपभोगैर्यैरेवाश्रितस्यासकृदुपावर्तनं दृश्यत इत्युद्धर्तुमर्हसीत्यन्धोदपानस्थो भेक इवाहमस्मिन्संसारे भगवंस्त्वं नो गतिरिति ॥२॥

atha kimetaivānyānāṃ śoṣaṇaṃ mahārṇavānāṃ śikhariṇāṃ prapataṇaṃ dhruvasya pracalanaṃ sthānaṃ vā tarūṇāṃ nimajjanaṃ pṛthivyāḥ sthānāda-pasaraṇaṃ surāṇāṃ so’hamityetadvidhe’sminsamsāre kiṃ kāmopabhogair-yairevāśritasyāsakṛdupāvartanaṃ drśyata ityuddhartumarhasītyandhoda-pānastho bheka ivāhamasminsamsāre bhagavaṃstvaṃ no gatiriti // 2 //

Huge oceans dry up, summits of mountains crumble, the polar star shifts from its place, trees tumble and fall, the earth submerges in the deluge of the dooms day water, even the Gods do not stay permanently in heaven — then what is the use of pursuing sensual objects and enjoying pleasure derived from them in this artificial and perishable world? Creature engrossed or submerged in gratification of their sense organs and enjoyment of the sensual world have to roam endlessly in the cycle of birth and death.

So, oh sage, you are the only one who can give deliverance to me who is lying like a frog trapped in a dark well symbolising ignorance of true knowledge and spiritual delusions. Oh Lord! You are the only one who can give me shelter, succour and help in this world in this respect (2).

भगवञ्छरीरमिदं मैथुनादेवोद्भूतं संविदपेतं निरय एव मूत्रद्वारेण निष्क्रान्तमस्थिभिश्चितं मांसेनानुलिप्तं चर्मणावबद्धं विण्मूत्रवातपित्तकफमज्जामेदोवसाभिरन्यैश्च मलैर्बहुभिः परिपूर्णमेतादृशे शरीरे वर्तमानस्य भगवंस्त्वं नो गतिरिति ॥३॥

bhagavañśarīramidaṃ maithunādevodbhūtaṃ saṃvidapetaṃ niraya eva mūtradvāreṇa niṣkrāntamasthibhiścitaṃ māṃsenānuliptaṃ carmaṇāva-baddhaṃ viṇmūtravātapittakaphamajjāmedovasābhiranyaiśca malairbahu-bhiḥ paripūrṇametādrśe śarīre vartamānasya bhagavaṃstvaṃ no gatiriti // 3 //

Oh Lord! If this body, which is produced by the union of a male and a female, is without 'Gyan' (wisdom, erudition, intelligence, knowledge and enlightenment), then it should be treated as hell because it has come out of the opening from where the female passes her urine, is constructed of bones, cemented by flesh, covered by skin and full of so many dirty and abhorable things such as faeces, urine, wind, bile, mucous, bone marrow, flesh etc.. You are the only one who can give shelter and succour to such a despicable and hateful creature like me whose body is so disgusting and abhorable' (3).

अथ भगवाञ्छाकायन्यः सुप्रीतोऽब्रवीद्राजानं महाराज बृहद्रथेक्ष्वाकुवंशध्वजशीर्षात्मजः  
कृतकृत्यस्त्वं मरुन्नाम्नो विश्रुतोऽसीत्ययं खल्वात्मा ते कतमो भगवन्वर्ण्य इति तं  
होवाच ॥४॥

atha bhagavāñchākāyanyaḥ supṛīto'bravīdrājānaṁ mahārāja bṛhadrathe-  
kṣvākuvamśadhvaśīrṣātmajñaḥ kṛtakṛtyastvaṁ marunnāmno viśruto-  
'sītyayaṁ khalvātmā te katamo bhagavānvarṇya iti taṁ hovāca // 4 //

When he was humbly requested so, Lord Shakayanya became glad and said to the king, 'Oh great king Brihadrath! You are a noble person belonging to the 'Ikshwaku' clan. You are self-realised and enlightened, are most contented and gracious, and are famous by the name of 'Marut' (which literally means 'wind') which is your Atma. [The vital wind called Pran is synonymous with the Atma of a creature. The king had realised his true identity as the Atma. That is why he is being identified with his essential, primary form as the wind and not with the name given to his body by the parents when he was born as their child, as king Brihadrath.]'

Then king Brihadrath asked the sage, 'Oh Lord! What is the true nature and form of Atma? Please be kind to describe this mystery to me'.

Hearing this, the sage replied as follows— (4)

शब्दस्पर्शादयो येऽर्था अनर्था इव ते स्थिताः । येषां सक्तस्तु भूतात्मा न स्मरेच्च परं पदम्  
॥५॥

śabdasparśādayo ye'rthā anarthā iva te sthitāḥ /  
yeṣāṁ saktastu bhūtātmā na smarecca paraṁ padam // 5 //

'The perceptions of the various sense organs, such as speech, touch etc., are the harbingers of misfortunes and tragedies. The Atma of the creature which is engrossed in them can never have time or inclination to think of or remember the true nature and stature of the supreme state of existence called the 'Param Pad' (5).

तपसा प्राप्यते सत्त्वं सत्त्वात्संप्राप्यते मनः । मनसा प्राप्यते ह्यात्मा ह्यात्मापत्त्या निवर्तते ॥६॥

tapasā prāpyate sattvaṃ sattvātsamprāpyate manaḥ /  
manasā prāpyate hyātmā hyātmāpattya nivartate // 6 //

‘Gyan’ (truthful knowledge, wisdom, erudition and enlightenment) is obtained by doing ‘Tapa’ (observing austerities and doing penances, undergoing hardship and keeping self restraint, committing oneself wholeheartedly to attain the desired noble goal of spiritual upliftment and final salvation). With the advent of Gyan, the mind-heart complex can be put under leash and thereby controlled. By controlling the mind and heart, one can attain the knowledge of the Atma (i.e., one can experience the subtle energy and supreme bliss emanating from the Atma). And once the Atma is experienced or witnessed, one gets not only bliss but also liberation and deliverance from this perishable world (6).

यथा निरिन्धनो वह्निः स्वयोनवुपशाम्यति । तथा वृत्तिक्षयाच्चित्तं स्वयोनवुपशाम्यति ॥७॥

yathā nirindhano vahniḥ svayonāvupaśāmyati /  
tathā vṛttikṣayaścittaṃ svayonāvupaśāmyati // 7 //

Even as a fire is automatically extinguished when its fuel is exhausted, the mind-intellect (called Chitta; the sub-conscious aspect of the mind) settles peacefully in the Atma once its various ‘Vrittis’ (the inherent tendencies of the mind-intellect which makes it wave and bend towards this materialistic but artificial world of false inducements) are purged and eliminated (7).

स्वयोनवुपशान्तस्य मनसः सत्यगामिनः । इन्द्रियार्थविमूढस्यानृताः कर्मवशानुगाः ॥८॥

svayonāvupaśāntasya manasaḥ satyagāmināḥ /  
indriyārthavimūḍhasyānṛtāḥ karmavaśānugāḥ // 8 //

The mind —which has turned its attention towards the real truth, has established itself peacefully in its original foundation (in the Atma or Pran) and has realised that without the Atma, it would have had no existence in the first place —finds these sensual objects of the materialistic world in which it indulges and remain engrossed in on being impelled by the various deeds, as false, irrelevant and untrue as soon as its (mind’s) delusions and misconception about the sense organs and their attachments towards their respective objects of perception in the world are removed (8).

चित्तमेव हि संसारस्तत्प्रयत्नेन शोधयेत् । यच्चित्तस्तन्मयो भवति गुह्यमेतत्सनातनम् ॥९॥

cittameva hi saṃsārastatprayatnena śodhayet /  
yaccittastanmayo bhavati guhyametatsanātanam // 9 //

‘Chitta’ (the mind-intellect complex; the sub-conscious which is the subtle part of the mind) is the ‘World’ (i.e., the world has its existence and relevance because the mind thinks that it exists; the mind receives the stimuli originating from the world in the form of various perceptions which it receives through the sense organs, and the mind sieves through this torrent of perceptions to transfer only important information to the intellect to think and ponder upon them and take a considered and thought-after decision, and then direct the mind to react in such and such way to that particular stimuli or perception). Hence, efforts should be made to purify the ‘Chitta’ and cleanse it of all impurities (impure and corrupted thoughts). If the mind-intellect complex is in a ship-shape condition, when it works in an ideal environment, it naturally follows that the orders issued by the intellect would be of a high calibre. ‘One becomes what one thinks’ is a profound, universal and eternal truth (9).

[Note :- In the context of cleaning of the mind-intellect complex called the *Chitta*, the holy Bible has this to say— ‘For ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee! Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also... for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones and of all uncleanness’ —Bible, Gospel of St. Matthew, 23/25-27.]

चित्तस्य हि प्रसादेन हन्ति कर्म शुभाशुभम् । प्रसन्नात्मात्मनि स्थित्वा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥१०॥

cittasya hi prasādena hanti karma śubhāśubham /  
prasannātmātmani sthitvā sukhamakṣayamaśnute // 10 //

When the ‘Chitta’ (mind-intellect complex called the subtle body of the creature) becomes calm, peaceful and settled, all the deeds, whether good or bad, are crushed or vanquished (i.e., all the deeds and their consequences cease to effect the creature’s peace of mind)<sup>1</sup>.

Such a peaceful and calm man, whenever he submerges himself in the ocean-like Atma, obtains limitless, supreme and imperishable bliss (10).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>When a person’s mind-intellect complex takes a decision in a peaceful and calm manner, as opposed to a restless and agitated situation, the decision would be of top quality. Doing deeds without being engrossed in them and without bothering about the good or bad consequences of those deeds, i.e., doing the deeds with complete dispassion, doing them as a matter of duty and leaving the rewards or punishment to the Lord, remaining aloof from either the deeds or their

consequences, is considered as the best direction given by the mind-intellect complex to the creature. See also verse no. 12 below.]

समासक्तं यदा चित्तं जन्तोर्विषयगोचरम् । यद्येवं ब्रह्मणि स्यात्तत्को न मुच्यते बन्धनात् ॥११॥

samāsaktaṃ yadā cittam jantorviṣayagocaram /  
yadyevaṃ brahmaṇi syāttatko na mucyeta bandhanāt // 11 //

The extend to which the man's 'Chitta' is engrossed in pursuing the objects of the external world, if the same diligence, sincerity and commitment is shown towards Brahm, then say who cannot find freedom from all the fetters that shackle and pillory the creature to this mundane, delusory and entrapping world of torments and troubles, of artificiality and illusions? [That is, everyone can obtain liberation and deliverance if his 'Chitta'—the mind-intellect complex—is focused on the Brahm instead of the world.] (11)

[Note :- The Bible has this to say, 'For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace' (Bible Romans, 8/5-6).]

हत्युण्डरीकमध्ये तु भावयेत्परमेश्वरम् । साक्षिणं बुद्धिवृत्तस्य परमप्रेमगोचरम् ॥१२॥

hr̥tpuṇḍarīkamadhye tu bhāvayetparameśvaram /  
sākṣiṇam buddhivṛttasya paramapremagocaram // 12 //

One should acquire truthful knowledge of the supreme Lord who is present in the center (core) of the lotus-like heart, is a witness to all the deeds done at the behest of the mind, and who is endeared only by sincerity of devotion and love. [See also not to verse no. 10 above.] (12)

अगोचरं मनोवाचामवधूताधिसंप्लवम् । सत्तामात्रप्रकाशैकप्रकाशं भावनातिगम् ॥१३॥

agocaram manovācāmavadhūtādhisaṃplavam /  
sattāmātraprakāśaika-prakāśam bhāvanātigam // 13 //

That imperishable supreme Lord cannot be comprehended by the mind and narrated by the speech. He is without a beginning or an end. He is always, consistently and persistently, illuminated by the light of supreme Truth, and he is beyond the purview and reach of imagination as well as comprehension (13).

अहेयमनुपादेयमसामान्यविशेषणम् । ध्रुवं स्तिमितगम्भीरं न तेजो न तमस्ततम् ।  
निर्विकल्पं निराभासं निर्वाणमयसंविदम् ॥१४॥

aheyamanupādeyamāsāmānyaviśeṣaṇam / dhruvaṁ stimitagambhīraṁ na  
tejo na tamastatam / nirvikalpaṁ nirābhāsaṁ nirvāṇamayasaṁvidam // 14 //

It is impossible to either accept or reject the supreme essence because its majesty, magnificence and glory as well as truthfulness will not be affected whether one accepts it or not. That supreme, transcendental essence is stable and unwavering, is peaceful, calm and tranquil, is grave and serious, has fathomless depth and gravity, and is profound, magnificent and fascinating. It is neither an image of light nor is it spread in the form of darkness. It is therefore without a second; it is a unique entity which is matchless and unparalled. It is, at the same time, certain, unambiguous, changeless and immutable; it cannot be perceived by the sense organs; it is a provider of emancipation and salvation, and it is pure conscious personified (14).

नित्यः शुद्धो बुद्धमुक्तस्वभावः सत्य सूक्ष्मः संविभुश्चाद्वितीयः ।  
आनन्दाब्धिर्यः परः सोऽहमस्मि प्रत्यग्धातुर्नात्र संशीतिरस्ति ॥१५॥

nityaḥ śuddho buddhamuktasvabhāvaḥ satyaḥ sūkṣmaḥ  
saṁvibhuścādvitīyaḥ /  
ānandābdhīryaḥ paraḥ so'hamasmi pratyagdhāturnātra saṁśītirasti // 15 //

He, the supreme Lord (Brahm) is eternal, perpetual, constant, ceaseless and immutable (“Nitya”), is pure, divine and holy (“Shuddha”), is an embodiment or image of ‘Gyan’ (wisdom, erudition, enlightenment and truthful knowledge), is independent in his thought and behaviour (and not bound to any set parameters or traditions—“Mukta Svabhaava”), is an image and personification of Truth and Reality (“Satya”), is most subtle and sublime (“Sukshma”), is immanent, all pervading, omnipresent and all-encompassing (“Samvibhushcha”), and is unique, matchless and without a parallel (“Advitiya”).

The seeker/aspirant who has the truthful knowledge of Brahm should think that he (the seeker/aspirant) is the one who personifies that ocean of supreme bliss and beatitude as well as the virtues and myriad forms in which that Brahm has revealed himself (in the form of this vast, diverse cosmos). The seeker/aspirant should be convinced that there is no doubt about it (15).

आनन्दमन्तर्निजमाश्रयं तमाशापिशाचीमवमानयन्तम् ।  
आलोकयन्तं जगदिन्द्रजालमापत्कथं मां प्रविशेदसङ्गम् ॥१६॥

ānandamantarnijamāśrayaṃ tamāśāpiśācīmavamānayantaṃ /  
 ālokayantaṃ jagadindrajālamāpatkathaṃ mām praviśedasaṅgam // 16 //

‘I derive immense bliss which originates in my bosom, and relaying on it, I would push the whole devil in the form of hopes and desires away from me. The supreme entity residing in my bosom<sup>1</sup> observes the activities of this whole world like one watches the tricks of a juggler, i.e., it does not get involved emotionally and remains only a spectator, a witness, only to the play unfolding around it. That entity does not get emotionally attached to anything and remains dispassionate towards and detached from everything. How can, therefore, sorrows, anguish, agonies, troubles and tribulation of any kind ever find entrance in my bosom? (16)

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The supreme entity referred here is the Atma/soul of the creature. When the seeker realises that his true identity is the Atma or soul residing in his bosom, and that this Atma is no one else but the supreme Brahman himself, he derives profound peace and bliss. With this enlightenment comes detachment and dispassion to the body and the world. The seeker/aspirant acquires an altitude of a spectator—he just watches and enjoys, and he has nothing to do with the actual play itself, he is not a participant. He loses all hopes and desires, because hopes and desire are made to obtain comfort, peace, happiness and joy. When the seeker/aspirant gets all these in his bosom itself in an eternal form, there is no need to seek them outside in the world in a temporary form. With this state of things, there is no scope of frustration, failures and a sense of dejection and dismay at all. There is no room for sorrows and anguish to make their presence felt in the heart.]

वर्णाश्रमाचारयुता विमूढाः कर्मानुसारेण फलं लभन्ते ।  
 वर्णादिधर्मं हि परित्यजन्तः स्वानन्दतृप्ताः पुरुषा भवन्ति ॥१७॥

varṇāśramācārayutā vimūḍhāḥ karmānusāreṇa phalaṃ labhante /  
 varṇādi-dharmaṃ hi parityajantaḥ svānandatṛptāḥ puruṣā bhavanti // 17 //

Those who are ignorant of the ultimate truth and reality are subject to the rewards or punishment for their deeds which they do while obeying or disobeying the codes of conduct prescribed for the section or class of society to which they belong (called the 4 Varns—)<sup>1</sup>, or to the various phases of life as prescribed by tradition (called the 4 Ashrams—)<sup>2</sup>.

But those who abandon all these superficial segregations and artificial limitations imposed by worldly traditions (in order to regulate the life of an ordinary man in society and to prevent anarchy and chaos), and instead focus their attention on and get firmly established in the superseding Atma residing in their own bosom, such persons are endowed with full contentedness derived from supreme bliss emanating and radiating out from the Atma (17).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The 4 Varns are the following— (i) ‘Brahmins’ who are the elderly, wise and moral preceptor class in the society, (ii) the



‘Kshatriyas’ who are the warrior class with the mandate to give protection to the society, (iii) the ‘Vaishyas’ who do commerce and trading to take care of the financial and other day to day material needs of the society, and (iv) ‘Shudras’ who are designated to serve the other 3 classes and take care of their daily routine chores so that they are freed from humdrum things and can concentrate their energy to their respective jobs.

<sup>2</sup>The 4 *Ashrams* are the following— (i) ‘Brahmacharya’ or the celibate phase of life as a student when a person studies under the tutelage of a teacher, (ii) ‘Householder’ when he enters the normal life of a worldly man, marries, raises a family and generally enhances the well being of the society. This phase of a householder is considered very important and is the phase which makes a man as high as Brahm, the creator, and Vishnu, the sustainer, themselves because he carries out their functions in this world, (iii) the ‘Vaanprastha’ is a person who hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and heads for the forest to lead a life of renunciation and getting prepared for his ultimate exit from the world. During this phase he roams in pilgrim sites and acts as an advisor to the family. This is the preparatory state for the last fourth stage called (iv) ‘Sanyas Ashram’. During this phase there is complete snapping of ties with the world, leading an absolutely secluded life as an ascetic, spending time in contemplation and meditation and preparing for emancipation and salvation upon death. Generally speaking, each phase of life has 22-25 years.]

वर्णाश्रमं सावयवं स्वरूपमाद्यन्तयुक्तं ह्यातिकृच्छ्रमात्रम् ।  
पुत्रादिदेहेष्वभिमानशून्यं भूत्वा वसेत्सौख्यतमे ह्यनन्त इति ॥१८॥

varṇāśramam sāvayavam svarūpamādyantayuktaṁ hyatikṛcchramātram /  
putrādideheṣvabhimānaśūnyaṁ bhūtvā vasesaukhyatame hyananta iti // 18  
//

All the rules and regulations, tenets and maxims to be followed by (i.e., prescribed for) the various ‘Varns’ and ‘Ashrams’ (see note to verse no. 17) as well as the different attires and marks on the body and the yoke (responsibility) which it has to carry while belonging to any particular Varn or Ashram —are all like a back-breaking burden for the creature. These have a beginning and an end (i.e., are perishable, temporary, impermanent), they are very painful, burdensome and encumbering for the creature, causing him endless agony and torments. Hence, one should not be too emotionally attached to one’s son and any other person with whom he comes in contact in this world. Instead, he should be firmly rooted in the infinite supreme bliss and felicity that is derived from contact with the Atma, and in being dispassionate, detached and renunciate with no expectations and desires of any kind from this world (18).

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

## Canto 2

अथ भगवान्मैत्रेयः कैलासं जगाम तं गत्वोवाच भो भगवन्परमतत्त्वरहस्यमनुब्रूहीति ।  
स होवाच महादेवः । देहो देवालयः प्रोक्तः स जीवः केवलः शिवः ।  
त्यजेदज्ञाननिर्माल्यं सोऽहंभावेन पूजयेत् ॥१॥

atha bhagavānmaitreyaḥ kailāsaṁ jagāma taṁ gatvovāca bho bhagavan-  
paramatattvarahasyamanubrūhīti / sa hovāca mahādevaḥ / deho devālayaḥ  
proktaḥ sa jīvaḥ kevalaḥ śivaḥ / tyajedajñānanirmālyam so'haṁbhāvena  
pūjayet // 1 //

Once, Lord Maitreya went to Mt. Kailash. There, he said to Mahadeo (the great Lord Shiva), 'Oh Lord! Please tell me about the mystery of the supreme essence which is the eternal, universal and ultimate Truth and Reality'.

Mahadeo replied, 'The body is like a temple while the conscious factor called the 'Jiva Atma' residing in it is the only supreme Lord who is truthful, blissful, auspicious and beautiful. Hence, one should abandon ignorance like it were an old, stale garland, and instead worship the conscious factor called Atma with the enlightened view that 'the supreme entity or Brahm is no one else but me'.

[The pronoun 'me' refers to the Atma or soul of the creature and not the gross body which is generally but erroneously treated as the identity of the creature. The Atma is synonymous with Brahm and it is the truthful identity of a creature, and therefore an enlightened creature begins to realise that he is indeed Brahm.] (1)

अभेददर्शनं ज्ञानं ध्यानं निर्विषयं मनः । स्नानं मनोमलत्यागः शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ॥२॥

abhedadarśanaṁ jñānaṁ dhyānaṁ nirviṣayaṁ manaḥ /  
snānaṁ manomala-tyāgaḥ śaucamindriyanigrahaḥ // 2 //

To treat the 'Jiva' (the living entity called Atma/soul inside the bosom of the creature) and 'Brahm' as one, indivisible and inseparable is called true form of 'Gyan' (true knowledge, wisdom, erudition, realisation and enlightenment).

To keep the mind separate and detached and diverted away from the objects of this world which gratify the various sense organs of the body, and instead keep it focussed on Brahm or Atma, is called 'Dhyan', which is uninterrupted contemplation and meditation upon the truthful entity called the Atma or Brahm.

[The intention or purpose of Dhyān is to heighten awareness of the pure self and to establish oneness of the microcosmic soul of the creature with the macrocosmic soul of the creation.]

To wash-off or purge all the faults and blemishes of the mind is equivalent to taking a formal, ritualistic bath to purify and clean oneself. To keep the various sense organs under restraint is equivalent to be pure, clean, incorrupt and holy (2).

[Note :- The Bible has this to say on the subject ‘Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, ‘First of all the commandment is, hear: the Lord our God is one Lord; and though shalt love the Lord the God with all thy *heart*, and with all thy *soul*, and with all thy *mind*, and with all thy *strength*’ (Bible, Gospel of St. Mark, 12/29-30).

The fact that God or Brahm resides as the Atma of the creature or as its spirit is the basic parameter of the holy Bible— ‘Ye worship ye know not what; when the true worshipper shall worship the Father (read Brahm) in spirit (read Atma) and truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God (read the Viraat Purush or the Hiranyagarbh) is a Spirit (read macrocosmic soul): and they that worship him (Brahm) must worship him in spirit (Atma) and in truth’ (Gospel of St. John, 4/22-24).]

ब्रह्मामृतं पिबेद्ब्रह्मक्षमाचरेद्देहरक्षणे । वसेदेकान्तिको भूत्वा चैकान्ते द्वैतवर्जिते ।  
इत्येवमाचरेद्धीमान्स एवमुक्तिमाप्नुयात् ॥३॥

brahmāmṛtaṁ pibedbhaikṣamācareddedarakṣaṇe / vasedekāntiko bhūtvā  
caikānte dvaitavarjite / ityevamācareddhīmānsa evaṁ muktimāpnuyāt // 3 //

To drink the nectar representing the blissfulness of Brahm, to beg and seek anything only for the purpose and extent of protecting the body (i.e., just enough to sustain a healthy body), to live alone in a secluded and calm place —a wise and erudite person should strive to live a life in this way and endeavour to attain emancipation and salvation (3).

जातं मृतमिदं देहं मातापितृमलात्मकम् । सुखदुःखालयामेध्यं स्मृष्ट्वा स्नानं विधीयते ॥४॥

jātaṁ mṛtamidaṁ dehaṁ mātāpitṛmalātmakam /  
sukhaduḥkhālayāmedhyaṁ sprṣṭvā snānaṁ vidhīyate // 4 //

One should take a bath after one touches the body because it is so very dirty and impure, being born out of the excretory organs (the urinary tract of a female) and is a product of the parents (i.e., it is the result of conjugal relationship between a male and a female, it is a product resulting from the union between the sperm and the ova, both of which are like globules or blobs of mucous). The body is mortal, perishable and

subject to death and decay; it is a treasury of sorrows, agonies, pains as well as joys and happiness, and it is most abhorable and despicable (4).

धातुबद्धं महारोगं पापमन्दिरमध्रुवम् । विकाराकारविस्तीर्णं स्मृष्ट्वा स्नानं विधीयते ॥५॥

dhātubaddham mahārogaṃ pāpamandiramadhruvam /  
vikārākāravistīrṇaṃ sprṣṭvā snānaṃ vidhīyate // 5 //

One should certainly take a bath after touching the gross body because it is full of so many defects and shortcoming— it is made up of the 7 ingredients, it has great diseases in it, it is an abode of sins, evils and perversions, and it is always unstable, transient and temporary.

[That is, it is so impure that one should purify oneself after touching it even as one needs to wash his hands when he touches something dirty and filthy.] (5)

[Note :- The 7 elements, according to Vedanta, that make up a gross body are the following— skin, bones, flesh, blood, excretory matter such as bile, urine and faeces, sperms/ova, and mucous.]

नवद्वारमलस्रावं सदा काले स्वभाजनम् । दुर्गन्धं दुर्मलोपेतं स्मृष्ट्वा स्नानं विधीयते ॥६॥

navadvāramalasrāvaṃ sadā kāle svabhāvajam /  
durgandham durmalopetaṃ sprṣṭvā snānaṃ vidhīyate //

This body has nine exit points or openings in it that are called its ‘doors’ (such as ears, nose, mouth etc.), and it constantly secretes excretory fluids (urine, bile) and accumulates faecal matters as its natural habit. The excretory products produce fetid odour inside it, and the body is full of this stink.

Hence, it is necessary to have a purifying bath after touching such a hateful, stinking, abhorable, abominable and dirty entity which we recognise as our ‘body’ (6).

मातृसूतकसंबन्धं सूतके सह जायते । मृतसूतकजं देहं स्मृष्ट्वा स्नानं विधीयते ॥७॥

māṭṛsūtakasambandham sūtake saha jāyate /  
mṛṭasūtakajaṃ dehaṃ sprṣṭvā snānaṃ vidhīyate // 7 //

The umbilical cord which links an infant to its mother’s womb comes out with it during birth. The impurities of the womb symbolically accompany the creature after birth. This impurity lasts even after death because a dead body is considered very unholy and impure.

[A dead body is removed from the household as soon as possible, and the place and the house is considered unholy for a particular period

after death when no religious ceremonies and other auspicious events can take place. If the body is not removed immediately, it starts to decay and deform, giving out a hellish stink.]

Since the body is so impure and unholy, it is necessary to take a purifying and cleansing bath after touching it (7).

अहंमेति विण्मूत्रलेपगन्धादिमोचनम् । शुद्धशौचमिति प्रोक्तं मृज्जलाभ्यां तु लौकिकम् ॥८॥

ahaṁmameti viṇmūtralepagandhādimocanam /  
śuddhaśaucamiti proktaṁ mrjjaḷābhyāṁ tu laukikam // 8 //

The filthy, stinking, abhorable and despicable body, consisting of faecal matters and urine (semi solids and waste fluids), is cleaned by rubbing it with clean clay and washing it off with clean water—but this washing exercise is only a cosmetic makeover, superficial and external in nature. The real cleaning takes place when one abandons the concept of ‘me and mine’ from his mind and heart (8).

चित्तशुद्धिकरं शौचं वासनात्रयनाशनम् । ज्ञानवैराग्यमृत्तोयैः क्षालनाच्छौचमुच्यते ॥९॥

cittaśuddhikaraṁ śaucaṁ vāsanātrayanāśanam /  
jñānavairāgyamṛttōyaiḥ kṣālanācchaucamucyate // 9 //

Internal purity cleanses and purges the mind-intellect complex of all its impurities such as ‘Vasanas’ (yearnings, desires, lust, greed, passions, infatuations etc. pertaining to the world) and ‘Vrittis’ (the inherent tendencies and inclinations of the creature). It purges them and insures their complete destruction so that they do not recur. The way to real internal purity is by symbolically using the rubbing-clay of ‘Gyan’ (wisdom, erudition, discrimination, truthful knowledge and enlightenment) and the water of total renunciation, dispassion and detachment, collectively called ‘Vairagya’ (9).

अद्वैतभावना भैक्षमभक्ष्यं द्वैतभावनम् । गुरुशास्त्रोक्तभावेन भिक्षौर्भौक्षं विधीयते ॥१०॥

advaitabhāvanā bhaikṣamabhakṣyaṁ dvaitabhāvanam /  
guruśāstroktabhāvena bhikṣorbhaikṣaṁ vidhīyate // 10 //

The firm conviction and confirmed view of ‘no-duality’ is the truthful form of begging<sup>1</sup>, while the thought of ‘duality’<sup>2</sup> is like food or thing which should not be eaten or touched. A mendicant or an ascetic seeking alms should do it according to the instruction of his ‘Guru’ (moral guide and teacher) as well as according to the guidance laid down by the scriptures (10).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>A renunciate mendicant, while begging for food, should not distinguish between tasty and non-tasty food, but he should instead accept what comes his way. He should not differentiate between any two households where he goes to beg based on the caste, creed, religion, financial state etc. of the household. For him, everything and everyone is alike. This is the practical application of the word ‘non-dual’ here. According to Vedanta philosophy, the idea or thought of non-duality is the purest and the highest form of thought, whereas duality is not.

<sup>2</sup>That is why ‘duality’ is considered worth abandoning because a Sanyasi is required or is supposed to partake the best and the noblest of thoughts as the staple diet of his soul. What one eats goes into the blood and ultimately moulds one’s thought processes in the mind. The stress here is on noblest of virtues, because only the best path is to be followed by a Sanyasi if he is to attain the highest stature of being one with the supreme Brahm..]

विद्वान्स्वदेशमुत्सृज्य संन्यासानन्तरं स्वतः । कारागारविनिर्मुक्तचोरवद्दूरतो वसेत् ॥११॥

vidvānsvadeśamutsrjya saṁnyāsānantaram svataḥ /  
kāragāravinirmukta-coravaddūrato vaset // 11 //

Just like a prisoner goes away to live a life in a far off place after being released from a prison, a ‘Gyani’ (a wise, erudite, sagacious, realised and enlightened person) should also go away to a distant place after taking the vows of Sanyas (which is total renunciation from the household and the world) (11).

[Note :- The allegory of a prisoner is very apt here. The creature is like a prisoner trapped in the world which represents a jail for it. A Sanyasi frees himself from it, and so he must go away incognito to a distant place so that he can live in peace.]

अहंकारसुतं वित्तभ्रातरं मोहमन्दिरम् । आशापत्नीं त्यजेद्यावत्तावन्मुक्तो न संशयः ॥१२॥

ahaṁkārasutaṁ vittabhātaram mohamandiram /  
āśāpatnīm tyajedyāvattā-vanmukto na saṁśayaḥ // 12 //

One who forsakes a son who symbolises one’s ‘Ahankar’ (pride, ego and haughtiness), a brother who symbolises his ‘Dhan’ (wealth and prosperity), the household that represents ‘Moha’ (worldly attachments, endearments, attractions, yearnings and other ignorance based allurements), and a wife representing ‘Asha’ (hope and expectation), such a person is able to obtain salvation and deliverance soon. There is no doubt about it (12).

मृता मोहमयी माता जातो बोधमयः सुतः । सूतकद्वयसंप्राप्तौ कथं संध्यामुपास्महे ।१३॥

mṛtā mohamayī mātā jāto bodhamayaḥ sutah /

sūtakadvayasamprāptau katham sandhyāmupāśmahe // 13 //

The mother, symbolising a person's 'Moha' (see verse no. 12), has died and she has given birth, before dying, to a son symbolising 'Gyan' (see verse no. 2). Therefore, the two unholy periods of death and birth are prevailing. [One is at the time of destruction of 'Moha' which is compared to the death of the mother, and the other is the birth of 'Gyan' as a result of the end of 'Moha', which again is compared to the birth of a son. According to Hindu tradition, both these periods are considered impure and no auspicious events can take place during a specific time period when these events occur.]

In such times, how can one adhere to the regimen of doing 'Sandhya' (which is a religious sacrament to be followed by a Hindu at least three times a day —morning, noon and evening hours, and which cannot be done in inauspicious periods).

That is, once Gyan sprouts in the bosom of the person, there is no need to observe such customs because they are meant for a routine life of an ordinary man who is busy in worldly affairs; they are meant to inculcate some responsibility in him towards his spiritual pursuits and remind him of his duty towards his own spirit or Atma and to ensure its upliftment, and he is expected to spend at least some time of the day in observing the sacraments. But a 'Gyani' does not need such reminders (13).

[Note :- The word *Sandhya* means a period or juncture point occurring three times a day when two periods of time meet each other —viz., morning, when the sun rises and darkness of the night meets the light of the day, noon when the pre-noon hours meet the post-noon hours and the sun is in its zenith in the sky, and evening hours when the sun is setting and lighted hours meet the dark hours. During these periods, Gayatri Mantra or any other devotional Mantra or hymns or prayer are said in honour of Sun-God or any other patron God of the devotee. Observation of these sacraments are said to be very rewarding and beneficial for the person who does them.]

हृदाकाशे चिदादितयः सदा भासति भासति । नास्तमेति न चोदेति कथं  
संध्यामुपास्महे ।१४॥

hṛdākāśe cidādityaḥ sadā bhāṣati bhāṣati /

nāstameti na codeti katham sandhyāmupāśmahe // 14 //

In the subtle sky of the heart, the Sun symbolising pure consciousness (Atma/soul) is always shining brightly and splendorously. It neither sets nor rises. Then, say, when and how can one do 'Sandhya'?

[Since Sandhya prayers are offered when the sun is rising in the morning, when it has moved up into the sky to reach the zenith point in the center of the sky at noon, and when it is about to set in the horizon in the evening sky, there is no such occasion in the case of the subtle sky of the heart, because the sun here —represented by the pure conscious Atma—is perpetual, never setting. So there is no occasion when the Sandhya prayers can be said.] (14)

[Note :- The subtle message of verse nos. 13 and 14 is that the various rituals, sacraments, formalities, including the repetition, incantation, chanting or recitation of Mantras are all meant for the ultimate liberation and deliverance of a creature. The creature is not meant for them, but they are meant to help the creature in his spiritual upliftment. The Holy Bible has this to say on the observance of various religious rituals and sacraments— ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath’ (Bible, Gospel of St. Mark, 2/27-28).]

एकमेवाद्वितीयं यद्गुरोर्वाक्येन निश्चितम् । एतदेकान्तमित्युक्तं न मठो न वनान्तरम् ॥१५॥

ekamevādvitīyaṃ yadgurorvākyaena niścitaṃ /  
etadekāntamityuktaṃ na maṭho na vanāntaram // 15 //

Everything here is the same; there is no distinction or difference between any two entities. [The emphasis here is on ‘non-duality’ concept of Vedanta, which essentially says that everything in this creation is a manifestation of the only one entity which is known as Brahm; the basic ingredients in all animate as well as inanimate creatures are the same five basic ‘Bhoots’ —which are space/sky, wind/air, fire/energy, water/fluid and earth/something very gross and which acts as a base or foundation.]

This is established by the teaching of a wise ‘Guru’ (who is a wise moral preceptor and expert spiritual guide). This firm conviction and deep rooted belief is equivalent to being alone and lonely in a secluded forest or living a sequestered life in a monastery having a religious ambience, surrounded by monks and religious books. The centre of a ‘Muth’ (an abbey, a monastery) or a forest is not a secluded or lonely place as compared to the realisation of the truth, or having enlightenment (15).

[Note :- That is, the very realisation that the world is non-dual, the very firm conviction that everything, from the minutest to the most colossus, consist of the same basic cosmic super conscious entity or element called Brahm operating in them in equal terms, equal intensity and equal vitality, that Brahm is the central piece to give peace and tranquility to the creature and this cannot be obtained in a monastery or a forest if this enlightenment is absent in a person —this is the true means of obtaining peace and bliss, beatitude and felicity. A person who lives in a forest or surrounded by monks and religious books in a ‘Muth’ will never find peace for himself if there is no wisdom and enlightenment about the truth in his heart and mind and they remain glued to the world and its objects of pleasure and comfort. Therefore, truthful peace and bliss comes not



from knowledge but from enlightenment, it does not come from living a sequestered and lonely life, whether it is in an abbey or a forest and mugging up text books by heart, but from enlightenment about the truth of existence and the essential teachings in those books, which is the falsehood of everything that is visible and the truthfulness of the Atma and Brahm which are not visible.]

असंशयवतां मुक्तिः संशयाविष्टचेतसाम् । न मुक्तिर्जन्मजन्मान्ते तस्माद्विश्वासमाप्नुयात् । १६ ॥

asaṁśayavatāṁ muktiḥ saṁśayāviṣṭacetasām /  
na muktirjanmajanmānte tasmādvīśvāsamāpnuyāt // 16 //

Those persons who don't have confusions and doubts can obtain 'Mukti' (liberation and deliverance), whereas those who have doubts and confusions can never hope to find 'Mukti' even at the end of living many lives searching for it. Therefore, one should have firm belief in the words of one's wise Guru as well as in the scriptures (16).

[Note :- The importance of having faith and conviction is emphasised in the following words of the Holy Bible— 'Jesus answered and said unto them, verily I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, 'be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea', it shall be done. And all things whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive' (Bible, Gospel St. Matthew, 21/21-22), and 'Have faith in God' (Gospel St. Mark, 11/22).]

कर्मत्यागाच्च संन्यासो न प्रैषोच्चारणेन तु । संधौ जीवात्मनोरैक्यं संन्यासः परिकीर्तितः । १७ ॥

karmatyāgānna saṁnyāso na preṣoccāraṇena tu /  
sandhau jīvātmanoraikyaṁ saṁnyāsaḥ parikīrtitaḥ // 17 //

To abstain from doing deeds is not true 'Sanyas' (renunciation, dispassion and detachment). Similarly, no one become a 'Sanyasi' (the follower of the path of Sanyas) by simply saying 'I am a Sanyasi!' To experience oneness and non-duality of the 'Jiva' (the living consciousness or Atma of the creature at the micro level) with the 'Parmatma' (the super conscious soul or the Atma of the cosmos at the macro level) during the state of 'Samadhi' (which is a trance like state of pure bliss obtained during the last stage of meditation) is a truthful form of Sanyas. (17).

[Note :- During this state, a Sanyasi does all the expected duties in this world but he remains completely detached and dispassionate towards them. His mind is not at all engrossed in any of the deeds he does or activities he performs. His body might be doing them but his conscious mind is in a virtual 'neutral gear', as it were. Since he is not mentally involved in the deeds and actions, he is not affected by their results,

good or bad. Therefore, there is no cause for the mind to become restless or agitated; it remains peaceful and calm, which is a state obtained by an ascetic when he is in a state of consciousness called 'Samadhi'.]

वमनाहारवद्यस्य भाति सर्वेषणादिषु । तस्याधिकारः संन्यासे त्यक्तदेहाभिमानिनः ॥१८॥

vamanāhāravadyasya bhāti sarveṣaṇādiṣu /  
tasyādhikāraḥ saṁnyāse tyakta-dehābhimāninaḥ // 18 //

A person for whom all aspirations, desires, hopes and expectations appear to be reprehensible as vomited food and who has forsaken all attraction and love for the body, only he is eligible to take to the vows of Sanyas (renunciation and total detachment from the world and to lead a life of austerities, penances, meditation, self study, contemplation etc. generally done during the last quarter phase of life) (18).

यदा मनसि वैराग्यं जातं सर्वेषु वस्तुषु । तदैव संन्यसेद्विद्वानन्यथा पतितो भवेत् ॥१९॥

yadā manasi vairāgyaṁ jātaṁ sarveṣu vastuṣu /  
tadaiva saṁnyasedvidvā-nanyathā patito bhavet // 19 //

Only when total detachment and dispassion, a sense of complete and wholesome renunciation and lack of interest or any kind of attraction towards all the objects of the materialistic, mundane, entrapping world of delusion and artificiality sprouts or emerges and takes firm root in a person, should a wise and erudite person take the vows of Sanyas (see verse no. 18).

Otherwise, he is sure to fall wayward or deviate from his path; he cannot rigidly stick to his vows honestly and steadfastly, and would sooner or later go astray (19).

द्रव्यार्थमन्नवस्त्रार्थं यः प्रतिष्ठार्थमेव वा । संन्यसेदुभयभ्रष्टः स मुक्तिं नाप्तुमर्हति ॥२०॥

dravyārthamannastrārthaṁ yaḥ pratiṣṭhārthameva vā /  
saṁnyasedu-bhayabhraṣṭaḥ sa muktiṁ nāptumarhati // 20 //

A person who takes the vows to follow the path of Sanyas (see verse no. 18 and 19) in the hope of getting riches, fame, honour, glory, food, clothes and other materialistic things of this mundane world (in the form of charity or largesse from donors who donate such things to them in the belief that they are renunciates, and giving them anything is a righteous and noble deed), such a person is regarded as most contemptible, condemned and fallen. He is neither here nor there. He can never obtain liberation and deliverance from the fetters shackling him to the world, nor

can he expect emancipation and salvation of his soul from the cycle of transmigration. [The emphasis here is not to cheat oneself and the world by passing oneself as an ascetic, a renunciate and a dispassionate Sanyasi. Such deceit and pretensions not only will denigrate the person but would also give a bad name to the august institution of Sanyas (20).

[Note :- See also Sanyaso-panishad, Chapter 10, Canto 2, verse nos. 74-75 and 97 in this context also.]

The Bible also says an almost identical thing in this context—  
‘But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats at synagogues, and greeting in the markets, and to be called of men ‘rabbi, rabbi’, but ye not be called a rabbi’ (Bible, Gospel of St. Matthew, 23/5-8).]

उत्तमा तत्त्वचिन्तैव मध्यमं शास्त्रचिन्तनम् । अधमा मन्त्रचिन्ता च तीर्थभ्रान्त्यधमाधमा ॥२१॥

uttamā tattvacintaiva madhyamaṃ śāstracintanam /  
adhamā mantracintā ca tīrthabhrāntyadhamādhamā // 21 //

For a true Sanyasi, contemplation upon the essence which is the universal and ultimate Truth and absolute Reality of creation is considered the best path to be followed after he has taken the vows of Sanyas; the study of the scriptures is regarded as the medium or mediocre; the various meditative techniques and postures (e.g., physical exercises and sitting posture) and rituals involving Mantras and their incantations is considered inferior; while roaming in Holy places and pilgrim sites is regarded as the most lowly of any other means to be adopted by or the paths to be followed by a Sanyasi (21).

अनुभूतिं विना मूढो वृथा ब्रह्मणि मोदते । प्रतिबिम्बितशाखाग्रफलास्वादनमोदवत् ॥२२॥

anubhūtiṃ vinā mūḍho vṛthā brahmaṇi modate /  
pratibimbitaśākhāgraphalā-svādanamodavat // 22 //

Just like a man wishes to enjoy the taste of an imaginary or artificial fruit hanging from the end of the branch of a tree, it is absolutely futile and stupid for an ignorant and foolish man to even imagine the supreme bliss provided by Brahm realisation without actually experiencing it (22).

न त्यजेच्चेद्यतिर्मुक्तो यो माधूकरमान्तरम् । वैराग्यजनकं श्रद्धाकलत्रं ज्ञाननन्दनम् ॥२३॥

na tyajecedyatirmukto yo mādihūkaramātaram /  
vairāgyajanakaṃ śraddhā-kalatraṃ jñānanandanam // 23 //

A true Sanyasi who has become freed from formalities and fetters tying him to so many rules and regulations restricting him to various codes of conduct in this mundane world, i.e., one who transcends everything routine, mundane and worldly in nature and has attained liberation from all bondages, does not have to forsake his father symbolising ‘Vairagya’ (renunciation), his wife symbolising ‘Shraddha’ (faith, respect, reverence and honour, belief and conviction as well as having devotion) and a son symbolising ‘Gyan’ (truthful knowledge, erudition, wisdom, sagacity and enlightenment). He can still enjoy or experience the supreme bliss (of Brahm realisation) present in the non-dual Atma (his pure conscious self) present in his bosom inspite of their (father, wife, son) company. (23).

[Note :- The allusion to a father, a wife and a son signifies that though a Sanyasi is expected to forsake his family ties when taking to Sanyas, he can still keep the company of the virtues they represent —such as Vairagya, Shraddha and Gyan respectively. He can still contemplate upon and experience the bliss of realisation of the non-dual nature of is Atma which is synonymous and not distinct from the supreme Brahm. A Sanyasi should treat these virtues as his relatives, the father, wife and son whose company he has been enjoying during his earlier days as a householder, and therefore he never feels alone. In fact, these virtues will aid him and help him in his spiritual endeavours just like a worldly father, a wife or a son helps a man to fulfil his commitments and do his duties successfully as a householder. The father is there to give him good advise, the wife takes care of his daily chores and comforts as well as looks after the affairs of the family, and the son lends him a helping hand in his vocation. Similarly, ‘Vairagya’ guides and advises a Sanyasi, ‘Shraddha’ keeps him rooted to his vows, and ‘Gyan’ helps in his endeavours to achieve success in emancipation and salvation by showing him the correct path and pointing out the pitfalls. The worldly relations of a father, a wife and son are metaphors for these virtues. By saying that a Sanyasi need not detach himself from these relations, it simply means that he can keep these virtues while he follows the path of Sanyas, because the arduous and lonely journey of a Sanyasi will become easier if he is accompanied by these virtues even as a householder’s life becomes comfortable and easy when he is accompanied by his father, wife and son.]

धनवृद्धा वयोवृद्धा विद्यावृद्धास्तथैव च । ते सर्वे ज्ञानवृद्धस्य किंकराः शिष्यकिंकराः ॥२४॥

dhanavṛddhā vayovṛddhā vidyāvṛddhāstathaiva ca /

te sarve jñānavṛddhasya kiṃkarāḥ śiṣyakiṃkarāḥ // 24 //

A persons who is richer in wealth, is more aged or is more educated —he is just like a servant or a disciple/student in front of another person who has a greater experience (24).

[Note :- The Bible has this to say— ‘But he that his greatest among you shall be your servant’ (Gospel of St. Matthew, 23/11).]

यन्मायया मोहितचेतसो मामात्मानपूर्णमलब्धवन्तः ।

परं विदग्धोदरपूरणाय भ्रमन्ति काका इव सूरयोऽपि ॥२५॥

yanmāyayā mohitacetaso māmātmānamāpūrṇamalabdhavantah /  
param vidagdhodarapūraṇāya bhramanti kākā iva sūrayo’pi // 25 //

Those who are under the deluding, hallucinating and stupefying effect of ‘Maya’ (ignorance) and do not know or recognise the Atma as their true self, are like a stupid crow— though they might be educated, intelligent and experts —who hops here and there for morsels of food to feed its stomach.

[That is, those people who are not enlightened can never find peace of mind although they might be learned and scholarly in the scriptures. They will be jumping from one honour to another, one debate to another in the hope of getting fame and glory for their scholarship and erudition, but true wisdom and enlightened always eludes them.] (25)

[Note :- The Holy Bible has this to say— ‘And who so ever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted’ (Gospel St. Matthew, 23/12).

<sup>1</sup>Maya is a word which has two parts, Ma + Ya. The first half ‘Ma’ means ‘to measure, mark off, by any standard; to show, to exhibit, to display; to infer, to conclude; to be formed, built, made of’, while the second part ‘Ya’ means ‘this or that’. Therefore the composite word Maya means neither this nor that; anything that is not real; that which is delusionary, illusionary, deceptive, mirage like and deceitful, and is caused by the ignorance about its truth and reality; something that has no substance or pith; displays no certainty and leads to wrong inference. The term Maya is used to define all these phenomenons. Hence, Maya is a synonym used for all that is deceptive, faulty, false, deluding, ignorance based, illusionary, imposter, deceitful, invisible and para-natural; all that which has no reality or substance; all that is hollow.

Maya has three basic constituent qualities. Hence it is called ‘Trigunmayi’, i.e., one which has the three Gunas or qualities. These three Gunas or qualities are— Sat, Raj and Tam. ‘Sat’ is the most auspicious, virtuous and noblest quality in a man and raises him to a high moral and spiritual pedestal. It marks predominance of righteousness and the highest standards of spirituals and mental evolvement leading to high thoughts, noble actions and righteous behaviour. ‘Raj’ is the medium quality in a person, and it is marked by worldly passions, desires, yearnings and greed. It makes a man more worldly than spiritual. ‘Tam’ is the third and most lowly of the three qualities and is used as a synonym for darkness and evil. Obviously, ‘Tam’ means ignorance, delusions and all the forces or qualities that are evil, mean, lowly,

miserly, wicked and base. They pull down a man from high pedestal and virtually dump him in the dust yard of creation to rust and decay.

These three qualities together, in various permutations and combinations, decide the innate nature of a man. The greater presence of ‘Sat’ makes a man nobler as compared to a high ratio of ‘Tam’ which makes him wicked, pervert and evil. Various proportions of these qualities will therefore produce innumerable varieties of creatures having different temperaments, thought processes, behaviours, demeanours and mental setup in this world. Refer; (i) Chandogyo-panishad, canto 7, section 16, verses no. 1; (ii) Maitrayanyu-panishad, canto 4, verse no. 2; (iii) Maho-panishad, canto 5, verse no 111; (iv) Sanyaso-panishad, canto 2, verse no 20; (v) Avyakto-panishad, verse no. 1; (vi) Kundiko-panishad, verse no. 14; and (vii) Jabal Darshano-panishad, canto 10, verse nos. 6-7 ]

पाषाणलोहमणिमृण्मयविग्रहेषु पूजा पुनर्जननभोगकरी मुमुक्षोः ।

तस्माद्यतिः स्वहृदयार्चनमेव कुर्याद्वाह्यार्चनं परिहरेदपुनर्भवाय ॥२६॥

pāṣāṇalohamaṇimṛṇmayavigraheṣu pūjā punarjananabhogakarī mumukṣoḥ /  
tasmādyatiḥ svahr̥dayārcanameva kuryādbāhyārcanaṁ pariharedapunar-  
bhavāya // 26 //

Worship of idols made of stone, gold (metals) or clay make the seeker of emancipation and salvation fall aside from his chosen path and target, and instead it traps him into taking birth again and compel him to undergo all the sufferings and drudgery associated with a worldly life. Therefore, in order to make sure that he does not have to take birth again, a Sanyasi should forsake this type of external form of worship and instead focus his attention and mind in his heart (i.e., he should worship the Atma as an image of the supreme, transcendental truthful Brahm present in his bosom, instead of worshipping the supreme Lord in external, gross images such as idols which will be denigrating for his intellectual elevation and spiritual enlightenment) (26).

[Note :- Please also see (i) Jabaldarshan Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 48-59, and (ii) Sanyaso-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 74-75. The Jabal Darshan Upanishad verses clearly tell us why roaming in worldly pilgrim sites is a waste of time and effort if the real meaning of going on pilgrimage is not understood properly; it elaborately explains it. The Sanyaso-panishad verses explain the proscription of idol worship.

The Holy Bible is equally emphatic and explicit in matters of worship of idols made of stone, gold or clay— ‘we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art and man’s device’ (Bible, Acts, 17/29); ‘...saying that they be no Gods which are made with hands’ (Acts, 19/26).]

अन्तःपूर्णो बहिःपूर्णः पूर्णकुम्भ इवार्णवे । अन्तःशून्यो बहिःशून्यः शून्यकुम्भ इवाम्बरे ॥२७॥

antaḥpūrṇo bahiḥpūrṇaḥ pūrṇakumbha ivārṇave /  
 antaḥśūnyo bahiḥśūnyaḥ śūnyakumbha ivāmbare // 27 //

Water fills and surrounds a pitcher which is submerged in an ocean. Similarly, emptiness (sky) fills and surrounds a pitcher kept outside of an ocean (27).

मा भव ग्राह्यभावात्मा ग्राहकात्मा च मा भव । भावनामखिलां त्यक्त्वा यच्छिष्टं  
 तन्मयो भव ॥२८॥

mā bhava grāhyabhāvātmā grāhakātmā ca mā bhava /  
 bhāvanāmakhilāṃ tyaktvā yacchiṣṭaṃ tanmayo bhava // 28 //

You should not become an ‘acceptor’ or a ‘receiver’, and neither should you become the object worthy of ‘being accepted or received’ by anyone. Having forsaken all such fallacious and misleading imaginations and banishing all such thoughts that ‘I am a receiver’ of such and such thing, or that ‘I must be received (accepted and welcomed)’ by others, one should remain permanently absorbed or engrossed in whatever is the remainder<sup>1</sup> (28).

[Note :-<sup>1</sup>With the elimination of the concept of *I* which indicates the absence of ‘Ahankar’ (ego, pride, arrogance, vanity and haughtiness) about oneself, the creature becomes humble and modest in his outlook and demeanours. Further, when one thinks that he is not the ‘doer’ of anything, there is no question of the reward being his, and consequentially there is no expectation of being praised or honoured or well received in the society for any good deed done by the creature. This is a state of total detachment and renunciation. With this thought process firmly established in the heart and the mind, the only thing that remains is the Atma which is pure consciousness, un-corrupt, pristine pure, immaculate and an embodiment of eternal bliss in which the Sanyasi is advised to remain perpetually absorbed or engrossed.]

द्रष्टृदर्शनदृश्यानि त्यक्त्वा वासनया सह । दर्शनप्रथमाभासमात्मानं केवलं भज ॥२९॥

draṣṭṛdarśanadr̥śyāni tyaktvā vāsanayā saha /  
 darśanaprathamābhāsa-mātmānaṃ kevalaṃ bhaja // 29 //

You should forsake ‘Vasanas’ (desires, passions and yearnings pertaining to the world) alongside the exercising of self control and restraint on the perception of sight that is instrumental of igniting the ‘Vasanas’. [Because if a man does not ‘see’ any charming and attractive thing, he will not be

lured by it and will not have a desires and yearning to access or acquire it, no matter how much he has to suffer for that acquisition.]

This will entail abandoning the view that ‘I am the person who sees a beautiful thing’, the perception of charm and allurement in the ‘thing seen’ and the faculty of sight that ‘enables a person to see the thing in the first place’. Out of these three steps involved in the ‘process of seeing’, the last—viz., the faculty of seeing, or the power that enables a person to see anything with his eyes —has its origin in the Atma as an experience. So, you must worship and honour that primary entity which enables the faculty of sight to see, which gives the required power, ability, strength, awareness and vitality to the eyes to enable them to see; that entity is known as the Atma which is at the root of and the cause of ‘seeing’ (29).

संशान्तसर्वसंकल्पा या शिलावदवस्थितिः । जाग्रन्निद्राविनिर्मुक्ता सा स्वरूपस्थितिः परा ॥३०॥

saṁśāntasarvasaṁkalpā yā śilāvadavasthitiḥ / jāgrannidrāvinirmuktā sā svarūpasthitiḥ parā // 30 //

The state of existence in which all ‘Sankalps’ (volitions, determinations, vows, ambitions) have calmed down and which transcends both the waking state as well as the sleeping state of consciousness when the seeker achieves a stability, firmness, gravity, dispassion, indifference, inactivity and lack of emotions, a state which is similar to a solid piece of emotionless rock, is called the most superior state of existence of the creature (30).

[Note :- Permanence and stability in the ultimate Truth is what the Bible says regarding Paul— ‘I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day’ (Bible, Acts, 23/1).]

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

### Canto 3

As noted in the Preamble to this chapter, the person who is described here with the pronoun ‘I’ is a self realised, enlightened Being, and not a haughty, egoist, proud hypocrite who pretends that he is Brahm or is equivalent to Brahm and demands honour, respect, reverence and submission from the world. We must read this canto as a follow up to the previous canto no. 2 which talks about renunciation and leading a life of sufferance, abstinence, austerity and penance. How can a true ascetic be ever boastful and appear to be saying ‘I am Brahm’? At the instant he realises his true self as the pure consciousness, the Atma, he exalts in ecstasy, just like saying ‘eureka, I have discovered my self!’ It’s almost like discovering one’s true self which makes a man so joyous that he isn’t



able to suppress his joy and astonishment. He exclaims aloud in ecstasy, oblivious of the fact that his remarks might be misunderstood and misconstrued by others —he isn't bothered about what others say or think about him in the first place.

अहमस्मि परश्चास्मि ब्रह्मास्मि प्रभवोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
सर्वलोकगुरुश्चास्मि सर्वलोकेऽस्मि सोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१॥

ahamasmi paraścāsmi brahmāsmi prabhavo'smyaham /  
sarvalokaguruścāsmi sarvaloke'smi so'smyaham // 1 //

'It (the Atma) is me and that (the transcendental supreme Brahm) is also me. I am Brahm. I am the cause of all creation and am the moral preceptor of the whole world. Whatever there is in this world is me, and nothing but me (as Brahm and Atma, the former being cosmic form of the super Consciousness, and the latter being the microcosmic aspect of the same Consciousness) [In all sooth and without gainsay, my own truthful 'self', which is my true identity, is the Atma, and not my gross body, and this Atma of mine is the same as the cosmic Atma known as the Parmatma, the Supreme Atma which is also known as Brahm, the supreme and super Consciousness.] (1).

अहमेवास्मि सिद्धोऽस्मि शुद्धोऽस्मि परमोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
अहमस्मि सदासोऽस्मि नित्योऽस्मि विमलोऽस्म्यहम् ॥२॥

ahamevāsmi siddho'smi śuddho'smi paramo'smyaham /  
ahamasmi sadāso'smi nityo'smi vimalo'smyaham // 2 //

I am 'Siddha' (successful, accomplished, acclaimed, expert, proven and valid). I am 'Suddha' (pure, holy, un-corrupt, unpolluted, unadulterated, immaculate and pristine). I am the supreme Truth. I am always present, am constant, perpetual and am eternal. I have no worldly faults, flaws, shortcomings, drawbacks or blemishes in me. [The obvious reason being that I am 'pure consciousness' personified.] (2).

विज्ञानोऽस्मि विशेषोऽस्मि सोमोऽस्मि सकलोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
शुभोऽस्मि शोकहीनोऽस्मि चैतन्योऽस्मि समोऽस्म्यहम् ॥३॥

vijñāno'smi viśeṣo'smi somo'smi sakalo'smyaham /  
śubho'smi śokahīno'smi caitanyo'smi samo'smyaham // 3 //

I am endowed and empowered with special, immaculate and true knowledge, wisdom, sagacity, erudition, scholarship and enlightenment. I am special, important, prominent, pre-eminent and exalted. I am 'Som' (the elixir of eternity and bliss). I am everything indeed that typifies pure consciousness and divinity and holiness and purity. I am auspicious; I am without any sorrows, anguish and grief; I am full of equanimity and equitability; and it's me who am awakened and 'pure consciousness' personified (because I have realised that I am nothing but the Atma, that I am not the gross body that the ignorant world treats me to be) (3).

मानावमानहीनोऽस्मि निर्गुणोऽस्मि शिवोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
द्वैताद्वैतविहीनोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वहीनोऽस्मि सोऽस्म्यहम् ॥४॥

mānāvamānahīno'smi nirguṇo'smi śivo'smyaham /  
dvaitādvaitavihīno'smi dvandvahīno'smi so'smyaham // 4 //

I transcend honours and insults (i.e., they do not effect, move or distract me in anyway), am without attributes or characteristics (i.e., I am neutral), and am 'Shiva' (one who is beautiful, auspicious, enlightened, holy and truthful). I am without any confusion and doubts or bewilderments and perplexities created by the two opposing views of duality and non-duality, as well as the tussle and tug-of-war between sorrows and happiness, pains and joys, loss and gains, depression and exultation; I am beyond these.

An exalted, divine, holy and pure entity that possesses these unique qualities is non other than me (i.e., I am Brahm personified, because these virtues are the characteristics of Brahm, the Supreme Being, the super Consciousness, the Parmatma) (4).

[Note :- The tussle between believing one school of thought that says Brahm is non-dual and one, and the other school that says Brahm and creature are two entities, creates a lot of confusion, schism, bewilderments and perplexities to the seeker of the ultimate 'truth' which can nevertheless be only one and not two. He is completely confounded and vexed by this debate. So the Upanishadic seer stresses here that there should be no confusion or doubt in this regard, for Brahm is one and not two. This is amply emphasised and repeatedly pointed out. See verse no. 1 above as well as verse no. 2, 25, 28 and 30 of Canto no. 2 of this Upanishad.

Similarly, the effect of extremes of emotions, such as having sorrows and happiness, can be visualised by imagining what happens to a man who is subjected to quick changes of temperature —e.g., having a cold shower and then a hot bath and repeating the cycle. He is sure to fall gravely sick soon.]

भावाभावविहीनोऽस्मि भासाहीनोऽस्मि भास्म्यहम् ।  
शून्याशून्यप्रभवोऽस्मि शोभनाशोभनोऽस्म्यहम् ॥५॥

bhāvābhāvavihīno'smi bhāsāhīno'smi bhāsmayaham /  
 sūnyāśūnyaprabhāvo'smi śobhanāśobhano'smyaham // 5 //

I am calm and full of equanimity; I go beyond the purview of emotions and sentiments (i.e., I have vanquished and conquered them). I am without any imaginations and appearances (i.e., I am not an impostor and a deceitful person).

I am 'light' personified; I am its radiance and splendour, its brilliance and brightness, its glory and illumination.

I possess all the dual and seemingly opposite characteristics that would confound the world and the un-initiated, for I am 'subtle and light' as well as 'very gross and grave', I am 'nothing and void' as well as 'everything and the truth', and I possess characteristics that are at once 'beautiful as well as ugly'.

[There is no wonder in this paradoxical situation as I am Brahm personified, and Brahm is the cosmic entity from which everything in this creation emerged, the qualities that are compatible as well as those that are incompatible with each other; the bad and the ugly as well as the good and the beautiful. Forsooth, there is nothing in this creation that is not defined by Brahm, that is not represented by Brahm, and since the creation has a mind-boggling array of diverse nature, virtues and characteristics, so is Brahm. And by extension, since I am Brahm personified, so are my characters which are equally as diverse and opposite as the world around me. But these opposing qualities and diversity that often seem incompatible with each other do not mean that I am like them—for, as stated in this Upanishad, I am beyond them, I transcend them, I am untainted and unaffected by them as I am immune and superior to them.] (5).

तुल्यातुल्यविहीनोऽस्मि नित्यः शुद्धः सदाशिवः ।  
 सर्वासर्वविहीनोऽस्मि सात्त्विकोऽस्मि सदास्यहम् ॥६॥

tulyātulyavihīno'smi nityaḥ śuddhaḥ sadāśivaḥ /  
 sarvāsarvavihīno'smi sāttviko'smi sadāsmayaham // 6 //

I cannot be compared to anything or anybody, for I am unique, matchless and one of my kind in this creation. I am eternal, perpetual, infinite, universal, pure, un-corrupt and eternally an image of 'Shiva' (beautiful, auspicious, holy, truthful, enlightened, wise, powerful, dispassionate, detached, Lord of all, a perfect renunciate, the most erudite and wise ascetic, and the one who has annihilated all my shortcomings and faults). I am beyond the imagination of all, and at the same time I pervade and encompass all. I am auspicious, holy and august; I am un-corrupted and un-tainted; I am eternal, constant, immanent, steady and everlasting (--- because I am the 'Atma') (6).

एकसंख्याविहीनोऽस्मि द्विसंख्यावानहं न च ।  
सदसद्भेदहीनोऽस्मि संकल्परहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥७॥

ekasaṁkhyāvihīno'smi dvisaṁkhyāvāhanaṁ na ca /  
sadasadbhedahīno'smi saṁkalparahito'smyaham // 7 //

I do not have either the attributes of non-duality or that of duality. [That is, I possess the attributes of 'duality' as well as the entire attributes which come under the definition of 'non-duality'. I encompass all.]

I am free from the distinction of being truthfulness and falsehood. [There is no confusion in me as to whether I am true or false. This fact is already established.]

I am free from having all 'Sankalps' (volitions, determinations, ambitions, vows and promises) (7).

नानात्मभेदहीनोऽस्मि ह्यखण्डानन्दविग्रहः ।  
नाहमस्मि न चान्योऽस्मि देहादिरहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥८॥

nānātmabhedahīno'smi hyakhaṇḍānandavigrahaḥ /  
nāhamasmi na cānyo'smi dehādirahito'smyaham // 8 //

I am free from variety and having a multiform nature (i.e., I am same everywhere; there is no variability in my existence; I am uniform, one, immutable, indivisible and unchangeable). I am a personification or image of the uniform, un-breached supreme bliss, happiness and joy. I am neither 'me' (i.e., I lack the ego factor of being so exalted and honourable with all the attributes that I have listed above for myself and my virtues or qualities) nor 'anyone else' (who has this ego factor in him). [That is, I am neutral. There is no distinction between what I call 'me' and the other person standing in front of me whom I call 'you', because the same Atma resides in both of us. When I say 'I am such and such', I just mean to introduce myself and not to show off my exalted and superior stature. I do not talk about my gross body, but my 'pure self' which is the Atma and which is Brahm and which is humility personified.]

I am free from the limitations, encumbrances and bondages created by any gross form such as that created by a body. [It's true, because a 'spirit' has no form as such. Spirit is wind, and wind takes the shape of the space where it is present. It is also like water, which is gross and which takes the form and shape and contour of its container] (8).

आश्रयाश्रयहीनोऽस्मि आधाररहितोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
बन्धनमोक्षादिहीनोऽस्मि शुद्धब्रह्मास्मि सोऽस्म्यहम् ॥९॥

āśrayāśrayahīno'smi ādhāraarahito'smyaham /

bandhamokṣādihīno'smi śuddhabrahmāsmi so'smyaham // 9 //

I am free from such mundane needs as having to seek a shelter for myself and neither can it be said that I don't have a shelter for me. I am without a foundation or support or a resting place (because I don't need one).

I am also free from all shackles and bondages, and neither do I need 'Moksha' (liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation) because I am already free from all bondages.

Verily indeed and in all sooth, I am a true personification of Brahm; I am an embodiment and an image of Brahm himself (9).

चित्तादिसर्वहीनोऽस्मि परमोऽस्मि परात्परः ।

सदा विचाररूपोऽस्मि निर्विचारोऽस्मि सोऽस्म्यहम् ।१०॥

cittādisarvahīno'smi paramo'smi parātparah /

sadā vicārarūpo'smi nirvicāro'smi so'smyaham // 10 //

I am free from the encumbrances created by 'Chitta' (mind and intellect complex; the sub-conscious mind) too. [That is, I do not need the mind and intellect to advise and guide me because I am already enlightened. I am self-realised and truly wise, so I don't need the prop of the 'Chitta'. Again, I have vanquished my wandering and restless mind and have instead focussed it on Brahm and my Atma. For all practical purposes, my mind has been made numb and I have freed myself from the bondages it creates by forcing one to get hooked to objects of sensual gratification, comfort and pleasure in this world.]

Indeed and without gainsay, I am the transcendental Brahm. I am both 'deep contemplation' as well as 'deep thoughts' personified, and at the same time, I am beyond their purview (10).

अकारोकाररूपोऽस्मि मकारोऽस्मि सनातनः ।

ध्यातृध्यानविहीनोऽस्मि ध्येयहीनोऽस्मि सोऽस्म्यहम् ।११॥

akārokārarūpo'smi makāro'smi sanātanah /

dhyātr̥dhyānavihīno'smi dhyeya-hīno'smi so'smyaham // 11 //

I am an image or personification of the three constituent letters of the divine, cosmic Word known as 'Pranav' or "OM", viz., A, U and M. The word OM is the representative word for the universal, infinite, absolute and eternal Truth that represents cosmic super Consciousness.

I am beyond the concept of seeker, that which is sought and the process of seeking. [That is, I am all the three rolled into one —I am the seeker, I am the object sought and the process of seeking that object.] (11).

सर्वत्रपूर्णरूपोऽस्मि सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणः ।  
सर्वतीर्थस्वरूपोऽस्मि परमात्मास्म्यहं शिवः ॥१२॥

sarvapūrṇasvarūpo'smi saccidānandalakṣaṇaḥ /  
sarvatīrthasvarūpo'smi paramātmāsmyaham śivaḥ // 12 //

I am complete and wholesome in all respects. I possess all the attributes of the One who is totally blissful, who is an embodiment of beatitude and felicity. I am a personification of all the pilgrim holy sites as well as Lord Shiva who is a manifestation of the supreme Lord, and who is a most auspicious provider of well-being and welfare to all the creatures in this creation (12).

लक्ष्यालक्ष्यविहीनोऽस्मि लयहीनरसोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
मातृमानविहीनोऽस्मि मेयहीनः शिवोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१३॥

lakṣyālakṣyavihīno'smi layahīnaraso'smyaham /  
māṭṛmānavihīno'smi meyahīnaḥ śivo'smyaham // 13 //

I cannot be targeted and I cannot be seen (because I am invisible though I permeate in everything, and I cannot be fixed to a particular spot that can be aimed at). I am the essence that does not dissolve (I retain my originality and do not become extinct or merged with any other entity). I am the proof, I am fit to be used as a universal standard, and I am the one who is a witness to the truth and the proof. [That is, I am the one who has the true knowledge of the reality, I've witnessed it, I've experienced it, I can prove it and at the same time I myself is the poof of that Truth and Reality.]

Therefore, I am an embodiment or image of 'Shiva' (see verse no. 6 and 12 also) (13).

न जगत्सर्वद्रष्टास्मि नेत्रादिरहितोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
प्रवृद्धोऽस्मि प्रबुद्धोऽस्मि प्रसन्नोऽस्मि हरोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१४॥

na jagatsarvadraṣṭāsmi netrādirahito'smyaham /  
pravṛddho'smi prabuddho'smi prasanno'smi haro'smyaham // 14 //

I don't see the gross world (i.e., I do not see the 'grossness' of this mundane, artificial, illusionary world; rather I see its subtle and sublime nature). I do not have the eyes and other gross organs of perception (such as the ear, nose, tongue and skin which are restricted to the gross body and not the subtle body of the creature, i.e., I don't have a gross body but only the subtle body).

I develop, progress and enhance my self spiritually. I am wisdom, erudition, knowledge and enlightenment personified. I am happy, joyous and cheerful. I am 'Har' (i.e., Lord Shiva)<sup>1</sup> (14).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>I am the one who takes away or eliminates all sins and sorrows; the word *Har* refers to Shiva who symbolises characteristic such as beauty, truth, auspiciousness, holiness, divinity, renunciation, enlightenment and peace; he is an eliminator of this evil world by annihilating it when it is full of sins and perversions, when the balance of evil and sins tilts so much that goodness and righteousness becomes almost negligible. Shiva is also an erudite and most enlightened ascetic, so here the word 'Har' refers to that aspect of enlightenment also. Further, Shiva is called 'Mahadeo', or the great God. He is almighty and omnipotent; so these characteristic or virtues are also present in me. The word 'Har' means to steal, abduct, remove, eliminate, dispel, alleviate. In the present context it means that being enlightened and wise, I have been able to overcome all my sins and misdemeanours and their effects. I have washed away all blemishes and cured all the blights that had been clinging to me.]

सर्वेन्द्रियविहीनोऽस्मि सर्वकर्मकृदप्यहम् ।  
सर्ववेदान्ततृप्तोऽस्मि सर्वदा सुलभोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१५॥

sarvendriyavihīno'smi sarvakarmakṛdapyaham /  
sarvavedāntatṛpto'smi sarvadā sulabho'smyaham // 15 //

I do not possess any gross organs (either of perception or of action, because I do not have a gross body), but still I (miraculously) do all the deeds myself.

I have satisfied myself and feel fully contented with what has been said in Vedanta (or, the knowledge given by the Upanishads has fully satisfied me and given rest to my agitated mind and heart; it has calmed all my restlessness and queries, and has given me peace and tranquillity of the mind). I am well-acquainted and well-versed in the Vedanta, i.e. in the knowledge of the Upanishads.

I am readily and easily available to all who wish to contact me because I am full of humility and do not have false pretensions or airs about me. That is, I am the one who is easily accessible to one and all (15).

मुदितामुदिताख्योऽस्मि सर्वमौनफलोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
नित्यचिन्मात्ररूपोऽस्मि सदा सच्चिन्मयोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१६॥

muditāmuditākhyo'smi sarvamaunaphalo'smyaham /  
nityacinmātrarūpo'smi sadā saccinmayo'smyaham // 16 //

I personify both the extremes of joy and sorrows, happiness and anguish, comfort and sufferings. I am the deemed reward of always keeping silent (i.e., not indulging in fruitless chatter, gossip, debates, criticisms etc.. Keeping quiet makes a man conserve the energy of his vital winds and remain composed and peaceful).

I am an image and an embodiment of pure, un-corrupt and glorious super Consciousness, as well as of the supreme and absolute Truth and Reality (because I am the Atma which is Brahm personified, and Brahm has these virtues) (16).

यत्किञ्चिदपि हीनोऽस्मि स्वल्पमप्यति नास्म्यहम् ।  
हृदयग्रन्थिहीनोऽस्मि हृदयाम्बुजमध्यगः ॥१७॥

yatkiñcidapi hīno'smi svalpamapyati nāsmyaham /  
hrdayagranthihīno'smi hrdayāmbujamadhyagaḥ // 17 //

Whatever there is, I am free from it (or I transcend it). I am neither very insufficient or miniscule and micro in nature nor am I more than enough or huge, vast, colossus and macro.

I do not have anything to do with a physical tissue known as the 'heart' of the gross body, but at the same time I reside in the centre of the 'lotus-like subtle heart' of the creature in the form of the Atma which is pure consciousness. [To wit, I am not a physical and gross entity like the heart present inside the body of a living being. In fact, I am the invisible and subtle entity that is the most important factor present in the creature that powers and drives the heart from within. Without me, i.e. without the consciousness that I represent and is present inside the heart of a creature, the latter would be dead as a piece of deadwood.] (17).

षड्विकारविहीनोऽस्मि षट्कोशरहितोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
अरिषड्वर्गमुक्तोऽस्मि अन्तरादन्तरोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१८॥

ṣaḍvikāra vihīno'smi ṣaṭkośarahito'smyaham /  
ariṣaḍvargamukto'smi antarā-dantaro'smyaham // 18 //

I am free from the so-called six faults or flaws associated with a creature<sup>1</sup> as well as the six gross features that constitute his body<sup>2</sup>. I also have no fear from the six legendary enemies<sup>3</sup> of a creature. I am a resident of the lonely, peaceful, secluded, serene and fortified inner sanctum (called the heart or bosom of the temple known as the body) of the creature (protected from being tormented by all these 6 trouble makers) (8).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The 6 faults or flaws that engulf the Atma are the ones associated with—(i) birth, (ii) worldly existence and its inherent problems, (iii) worldly development and progress, (iv) various



confusions and doubts associated with life, (v) decay and ruin, (vi) complete destruction and annihilation.

<sup>2</sup>The 6 gross features constituting the body of the creature are the following— (i) skin, (ii) flesh, (iii) blood, (iv) veins and nerves, (v) abdomen/stomach, and (vi) bone and marrow.

<sup>3</sup>The 6 enemies of a creature are the following— (i) Kaam = lust, desire, passion etc., (ii) Krodha = anger, rage, wrath, vehemence etc., (iii) Lobha = greed, avarice, rapacity, yearnings etc., (iv) Moha = attachment, attraction, infatuations and endearments etc., (v) Mada = arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy etc., and (vi) Maatsaraya = envy, joyously, ill will, malice etc.]

देशकालविमुक्तोऽस्मि दिगम्बरसुखोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
नास्ति नास्ति विमुक्तोऽस्मि नकाररहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१९॥

deśakālavimukto'smi digambarasukho'smyaham /  
nāsti nāsti vimukto'smi nakāarahito'smyaham // 19 //

I transcend and go beyond the limitations imposed by a country having geographical boundaries delineating location and place; at the same time, no destruction or demotion can be imposed on me by time and circumstance.

I am naked with nothing to conceal and hide, and am an image of bliss, joy, happiness, beatitude and felicity.

‘Not this, not this’ —I am free from this mode of denial, i.e., I am positive and certain about everything I say about myself. I do not deny anything about me and also about what I say or understand about this world. [I am very honest, positive and frank; I am without any doubts and confusions; and I don't dither and procrastinate.] (19).

अखण्डाकाशरूपोऽस्मि ह्यखण्डाकारमस्म्यहम् ।  
प्रपञ्चमुक्तचित्तोऽस्मि प्रपञ्चरहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥२०॥

akhaṇḍākāśarūpo'smi hyakhaṇḍākāramasmyaham /  
prapañcamuktacitto'smi prapañcarahito'smyaham // 20 //

I am like the infinite, endless, eternal, uniform, un-fractioned and the seamless sky or space element. I personify the concept of being infinite, endless, eternal, uniform, un-fractioned and seamless.

My mind, intellect and thought processes are beyond the impact and influence of various delusions, hallucinations, conceits, pretensions, crafts, deceits and connings which are generally associated with this maverick world. In all sooth, I myself am free from all these faults or taints that are collectively called the ‘Prapanch’ of the world, and I do not get involved in any of them (20).

सर्वप्रकाशरूपोऽस्मि चिन्मात्रज्योतिरस्म्यहम् ।  
कालत्रयविमुक्तोऽस्मि कामादिरहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥२१॥

sarvaprakāśarūpo'smi cinmātrajyotirasmyaham /  
kālatrayavimukto'smi kāmādirahito'smyaham // 21 //

I am an image of the all-illuminating 'light', and am an embodiment of the brilliant glow of consciousness emanating from a divine entity that is known as the Atma, which is pure supreme Consciousness itself.

I transcend and go beyond all the three dimensions of time—the past, the present and the future. That is, I am free from the fetters and limitations imposed by the factor of time. I am also free from 'Kaam' etc. (i.e., I am not servile to lust, passions and other worldly entrapments). [See verse no. 18 and its note also.] (21).

कायिकादिविमुक्तोऽस्मि निर्गुणः केवलोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
मुक्तिहीनोऽस्मि मुक्तोऽस्मि मोक्षहीनोऽस्म्यहं सदा ॥२२॥

kāyikādivimukto'smi nirguṇaḥ kevalo'smyaham /  
muktihīno'smi mukto'smi mokṣahīno'smyaham sadā // 22 //

I am free from the limitations of having or not having a gross body. I am without any attributes and characteristics. I am unique, being one and the only one of my kind (i.e., I am non-dual).

Though I do not seek or aspire for getting 'Mukti' or 'Moksha' (liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation) I am deemed to be always liberated, delivered and emancipated; I have achieved salvation (22).

सत्यासत्यादिहीनोऽस्मि सन्मात्रान्नास्म्यहं सदा ।  
गन्तव्यदेशहीनोऽस्मि गमनादिविवर्जितः ॥२३॥

satyāsatyādihīno'smi sanmātrānnāsmyaḥ sadā /  
gantavyadeśahīno'smi gamanādivivarjitaḥ // 23 //

I am beyond the debates of whether it's true or not true. It is only me who is truly present in all the dimensions of time and am not limited to any one dimension or plane.

I do not have to go anywhere because there is no destination where I need to go (simply because I am all-pervading, all-encompassing, omnipresent and immanent) (23).

सर्वदा समरूपोऽस्मि शान्तोऽस्मि पुरुषोत्तमः ।  
 एवं स्वानुभवो यस्य सोऽहमस्मि न संशयः ॥२४॥

sarvadā samarūpo'smi śānto'smi puruṣottamaḥ /  
 evaṃ svānubhavo yasya so'hamasmi na saṃśayaḥ // 24 //

Verily indeed and in all sooth and without gainsay, I am always eternal, same, constant, unchanging, uniform and universal. I am equitable, changeless, immutable and indivisible. I am peaceful and tranquil, serene and calm.

I am the supreme and most exalted 'Purush' (the male aspect of nature; the Lord God Vishnu himself). He whose characteristic features are marked by all the virtues listed herein before is, verily, 'me'. I am 'He' indeed, and there is no doubt about it (24).

यः शृणोति सकृदपि ब्रह्मैव भवति स्वयमित्युपनिषत् ॥२५॥

yaḥ śṛṇoti sakṛdvāpi brahmaiva bhavati svayamityupaniṣat // 25 //

A person who hears this Upanishad even once and firmly believes in it, he becomes synonymous with or equivalent to Brahm. This is what the Upanishad says (25).

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## (2.4) Sanyas Upanishad:

Belonging to the Sam Veda tradition, this Upanishad, as the name suggests, deals with the subject of 'Sanyas' or the life of a wandering, renunciate ascetic who is desires of emancipation and salvation, and has completely detached himself from all worldly ties and has trodden on the path of liberation from the fetters that shackle him to the mundane, artificial and entrapping world, and has sought to attain deliverance for his soul.

The 1<sup>st</sup> canto of 1 verse is a sort of introduction outlining the codes of conduct, dos and don'ts for a Sanyasi. It introduces the subject which is elucidated in great detail and in an easy to understand and implement manner in the 2<sup>nd</sup> canto having 123 verses. This canto is a detailed one defining a Sanyasi, classifying them into different categories, defines the way of life of each category, the course of conduct and ethos that the Sanyasi is supposed to follow and obey, the food they are supposed to eat, their aim and objectives in life, the things that act like bondages for them

which all Sanyasis should assiduously avoid, and so many other such small and big details pertaining to the concept of 'Sanyas' and the sanctioned lifestyle of a Sanyasi (a renunciate ascetic) have been detailed in this canto.

This Upanishad is like a ready reckoner for aspirants who wish to walk on the path of Sanyas, or those who wish to have a glimpse into the life of one. It describes the various genres of Sanyasis, their characteristic features and facets of life with special emphasis on true renunciation and dispassion towards this world, and the moral conduct, behaviour, duties, sacrosanct rules and the various options, dos and don'ts etc. for a Sanyasi's way of life that they are expected to follow. It defines and classifies the Sanyasi into different classes or types, and prescribes the life to be led by them; it delineates the various food habits, daily routine, demeanours and behavioural norms, ways for interactions with the world etc. for each category of Sanyasi separately as well as it lays down the general rules applicable to them all. Ultimately, their aim is to attain emancipation and salvation, to be one with the supreme Brahman and realisation of their true self. The Upanishad also emphasises that true Sanyas (renunciation, dispassion and detachment from this world and preparation for emancipation and salvation and final exit from this world to merge one's Atma with the supreme Atma, or Brahman, from where there is no return into this world anymore, i.e., the cycle of transmigration leading to continuous death and birth is disrupted and terminated forever and the Sanyasi ultimately reaches his goal of finding eternal bliss and beatitude) comes from within the aspirant/seeker, and not by external symbols and pretensions.

This Upanishad is very similar to Narad Parivrajak Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition which is Chapter 5.1 of this Book.

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## Canto 1

अथातः संन्यासोपनिषदं व्याख्यास्यामो योऽनुक्रमेण संन्यस्यति स संन्यस्तो भवति ।  
 कोऽयं संन्यास उच्यते । कथं संन्यस्तो भवति । य आत्मानं क्रियाभिर्गुप्तं करोति  
 मातरं पितरं भार्या पुत्रान्बन्धून्नुमोदयित्वा ये चास्यत्विजस्तान्सर्वाश्च पूर्ववद्वृणीत्वा  
 वैश्वानरेष्टिं निर्वपेत्सर्वस्वं दद्याद्यजमानस्य गा ऋत्विजः सर्वैः पात्रैः समारोप्य  
 यदाहवनीये गार्हपत्ये वान्वाहार्यपचने सभ्यावसथ्ययोश्च  
 प्राणापानव्यानोदानसमानान्सर्वान्सर्वेषु समारोपयेत् । सशिखान्केशान्विसृज्य यज्ञोपवीतं  
 छित्त्वा पुत्रं दृष्ट्वा त्वं यज्ञस्त्वं सर्वमित्यनुमन्त्रयेत् । यद्यपुत्रो भवत्यात्मानमेवेमं  
 ध्यात्वाऽनवेक्षमाणः प्राचीमुदीचीं वा दिशं प्रव्रजेच्च । चतुर्षु वर्णेषु भिक्षाचर्यं चरेत् ।  
 पाणिपात्रेणाशनं कुर्यात् औषधवदशनमाचरेत् । औषधवदशनं प्राश्नीयात् ।  
 यथालाभमश्नीयात्प्राणसंधारणार्थं यथा मेदोवृद्धिर्न जायते । कृशो भूत्वा  
 ग्राम एकरात्रं नगरे पञ्चरात्रं चतुरो मासान्वार्षिकान्ग्रामे वा नगरे वापि वसेत् । पक्षा वै  
 मासो इति द्वौ मासौ व वसेत् । विशीर्णवस्त्रं वल्कलं वा

प्रतिगृहणीयान्नान्यत्प्रतिगृहणीयाद्यद्यशक्तो भवति क्लेशतस्तप्यते तप इति । यो वा  
 एवं क्रमेण संन्यस्यति यो वा एवं पश्यति  
 किमस्य यज्ञोपवीतं कास्य शिखा कथं वास्योपस्पर्शनमिति । तं होवाचेदमेवास्य  
 तद्यज्ञोपवीतं यदात्मध्यानं विद्या शिखा नीरैः सर्वत्रावस्थितैः कार्यं निर्वर्तयन्नुदरपात्रेण  
 जलतीरे निकेतनम् । ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्त्यस्तमित आदित्ये कथं वास्योपस्पर्शनमिति ।  
 तान्होवाच यथाहनि तथा रात्रौ नास्य नक्तं न दिवा तदप्येतदृषिणोक्तम् । सकृदिवा  
 हैवास्यै भवति य एवं विद्वानेतेनात्मानं संधत्ते ॥१॥

athātaḥ saṁnyāsopaniṣadam vyākhyāsyāmo yo'nukrameṇa saṁnyasyati sa  
 saṁnyasto bhavati / ko'yaṁ saṁnyāsa ucyate / katham saṁnyasto bhavati /  
 ya ātmānaṁ kriyābhīrguptaṁ karoti mātaraṁ pitaraṁ bhāryāṁ putrān-  
 bandhūnanumodayitvā ye cāsyartvijastānsarvāṁśca pūrvavadvṛṇītvā vaiśvā-  
 nareṣṭiṁ nirvapetsarvasvaṁ dadyādyaṁānasya gā ṛtvijaḥ sarvaiḥ pātraiḥ  
 samāropya yadāhavanīye gārhapatyē vānvāhāryapacane  
 sabhyāvasathyayośca prāṇāpānavyānodānasamānānsarvānsarveṣu  
 samāropayet / saśikhānkeśānvi-srjya yajñopavītaṁ chittvā putraṁ drṣṭvā  
 tvaṁ yajñastvaṁ sarvamitya-numantrayet / yadyaputro  
 bhavatyātmānamevemaṁ dhyātvā'navekṣamāṇaḥ prācīmudiciṁ vā diśaṁ  
 pravrajecca / caturṣu varṇeṣu bhikṣācāryaṁ caret / pāṇipātreṇāśanaṁ  
 kuryāt auśadhavadaśanaṁācaret / auśadhavadaśanaṁ prāśnīyāt /  
 yathālābhamaśnīyātprāṇasaṁdhāraṇārthaṁ yathā medovṛddhirna jāyate /  
 kṛśo bhūtvā grāma ekarātraṁ nagare pañcarātraṁ caturo māsānvārṣi-  
 kāngrāme vā nagare vāpi vaset / pakṣā vai māso iti dvau māsau va vaset /  
 viśiṛṇavastraṁ valkalaṁ vā pratigrhṇīyānānyatpratigrhṇīyādyadyaśakto  
 bhavati kleśatastapyate tapa iti / yo vā evaṁ krameṇa saṁnyasyati yo vā  
 evaṁ paśyati kimasya yajñopavītaṁ kāśya śikhā katham  
 vāsyopasparśanamiti / taṁ hovācedamevāśya tadyajñopavītaṁ  
 yadātmadhyānaṁ vidyā śikhā nīraiḥ sarvatrāvasthitaiḥ kāryaṁ  
 nirvartayannudarapātreṇa jalatīre niketanam / brahmavādinō vadantyastamita  
 āditye katham vāsyopasparśanamiti / tānhovāca yathāhani tathā rātrau nāśya  
 naktam na divā tadapyetadrṣiṇoktam / sakṛddivā haivāsmāi bhavati ya evaṁ  
 vidvānetenātmānaṁ saṁdhatte // 1 //

Now, the Upanishad dealing with 'Sanyas'<sup>1</sup> is being described here. A person who gradually forsakes this world and ultimately renounces all his attachment or links with it altogether is called a Sanyasi. (Question—) 'What is called 'Sanyas' and who is a 'Sanyasi'?' (Answer—) 'A Sanyasi is one who relinquishes and forsakes all his worldly relationships and attachments such as those with his father, mother, wife, son, friends and compatriots, and consequentially ceases to be associated or linked with anything pertaining to the world of mutual relationships, interactions and interdependence.

As per established traditions and norms, he pays his respects to all the elders and honourable people, and then perform the great fire-sacrifice called 'Vaishwanar Yagya'<sup>2</sup>.

During the initiation process into Sanyas, which is like doing the great ritualistic fire sacrifice for spiritual elevation, seeking emancipation and salvation, the patron (i.e., the seeker or aspirant Sanyasi) should donate whatever he possesses (as a token of complete renunciation and detachment from his earlier way of life and the world). The ‘Ritwijs’ or chief priests who are overseeing the rituals associated with this fire sacrifice (and here symbolising the ‘mind-intellect’ of the Sanyasi because the fire sacrifice here is only symbolic) should offer everything that has been assembled (or gathered) for the performance of the sacrifice into the symbolic fire. [It means that when a person prepares for Sanyas, he should discard and abandon all his worldly possessions behind him and should symbolically burn them to ashes. With nothing left behind to ever attract him or pull his mind back into the world, he will have nothing which could or would attract and lure him, deviate and distract him, or at as a drag for him from his path of total renunciation in any time in the future after he has taken to the path of Sanyas. The chief priest in this symbolic fire-sacrifice is the mind-intellect of the Sanyasi himself, while the fire of the sacrifice is the fire which burns his attachments and desires.]

The Sanyasi should merge all the five types of worldly fires into the five vital wind forces of life. That is, the energy of these five legendary fires should be transferred to the five vital winds which sustain the life of the Atma. The five legendary fires are the following— (i) Ahavaniya (the fire used to invoke Gods during a sacrifice), (ii) Garhpatya (the fire used by a householder to keep his hearth warm), (iii) Dakshinagni (the fire used as a witness to charities and donations), (iv) Sabhya (the fire of the Vedic period) and (v) Avasathya (the fire of the Smriti period).

The five vital winds in which these fires should be established (for the purpose of worship by a Sanyasi) are the following— (i) Pran/Praan (breath; the vital wind which sustains life), (ii) Apan/Apaan (the wind which passes down the intestine; it helps in taking in food and its passage through the body) (iii) Vyan/Vyaan (the wind which maintains equilibrium in the body), (iv) Udan/Udaan (the wind which controls expulsion and the functioning of excretory organs; this wind also pushes up, as during coughing or belching), and (v) Saman/Samaan (the wind that controls circulation in the body and helps proper assimilation and distribution of the nutrients in all the parts of the body).

A Sanyasi should shave off his hairs on the head (i.e., tonsure it), including the tuft called ‘Shikha’ (which is a cluster of coired hair follicles at the top of the head generally worn as a mark by a Brahmin). He should abandon the ‘sacred thread’ (called Yagyopavit) also.

He should summon his son and tell him that he is like a fire sacrifice and an image of all that exists<sup>3</sup>.

If he does not have a son, he should address his own self and say what he would say to a son as described above. After that, he should proceed in the direction of the East or North (from his household)<sup>4</sup>.

As a Sanyasi, he should accept food or essentials as charity or alms from all the four classes of society without any discrimination or distinction between them (i.e., he should accept charities or alms equally from Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas or Shudras, because he is supposed to have risen above mundane considerations of caste, creed and religion,

and sees the same Brahm everywhere in all the creatures.). He should use his cupped palms (of his hands) as a pot to accept food given as charity to him by others to eat. The food should be treated like a medicine (it should be just sufficient enough to sustain his body and not to appease the taste buds or involve in indulgences and overeating). Whatever is available should be accepted (without any fuss) with an eye on abstaining from any diet containing fat products which can lead to obesity and lethargy and its other attendant problems. (See canto no. 2 verse no. 76-80 in this context).

In this manner, a Sanyasi should spend not more than one night in a village and five nights in a town or city. But during the four months of the rainy season, he should stay at one place (a village or a town). If he finds living there difficult for any reason, he should regard a 15-day period as being equivalent to one month and therefore spend at least two months by that count in a single place ( instead of the usual four month period). See canto 2, verse no. 99 in this context).

He should wear worn-out or tattered clothes (e.g., rags) or those made from birch (bark of a tree); no other clothes should be put on the body. To suffer in this way is a form of doing severe 'Tapa' (i.e., observing the rigors of severe austerities and penances). When a person accepts the vows of Sanyas in a proper way by following the precepts prescribed for this way of life, what is the need then for him to wear a sacred thread or a tuft of coiled hair (Shikha) on the head; why should he sip sanctified water with his palms (in a process called Achaman) to purify his mouth? [That is, if a person has taken to Sanyas sincerely and in a properly prescribed fashion, these formalities of purification of the body need not be observed by him because he has eternally purified himself. What is the significance of these external purification rites when he has permanently purified himself from within by detaching himself from the world which is the cause of all impurities?]

For such a true and sincere Sanyasi, his sacred thread is the constant contemplation upon and mediation on his Atma (which is the pure self and pure consciousness); his Shikha (tuft of hair on the head) is his wisdom, knowledge, learning and scholarship; his stomach is the pot/pitcher to store the water which is available everywhere (hence, there is no need of separately storing water or any other essential ingredient needed to sustain life); and his resting place is the bank of a water-body (such as a lake, pond, river, stream etc.). These characteristic features are also present in an erudite, wise and enlightened person who has realised Brahm, or who has acquired the supreme knowledge of the transcendental, supreme, macrocosmic, eternal, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent entity called Brahm'.

Another question is this— 'How should he sip sanctified water (Achaman) to cleanse his mouth when the Sun is about to set (i.e., during the twilight zone or at the time of dusk)?' The answer is — 'For him, both the day and the night are the same. For him, there is no such thing as a separate day or a separate night. A person who is persistently, consistently and constantly engrossed in contemplating and focusing his attention to find out the truth about his Atma, which is his pure self and pure consciousness, and which is a synonym of Brahm, there is always a day for him (signifying wakefulness and light of wisdom, awareness and

truthful knowledge about the reality)'. [The night of darkness of ignorance and the evil phantoms represented by numerous faults associated with this existence that have a field day in such nights of ignorance do not exist to torment him.] (1).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>A life of total renunciation, dispassion and detachment, preparing a person for liberation of his soul from the fetters that shackle him to this mundane, artificial and entrapping world and leading to his deliverance from it; it leads finally to emancipation and salvation when the creature merges his Atma with the supreme Atma of the cosmos known as the supreme, transcendental Brahm. With this merger, the cycle of transmigration ends and the creature does not have to take birth again.

<sup>2</sup>The word supreme *Vaishwanar* indicates the eternal fire burning inside the living creature giving it 'life'; here it means that the Sanyasi endeavours to realise the Atma or the pure conscious factor present in his bosom. This Atma is a fraction or an image and representative of the cosmic Atma of the creation, called Brahm. Since the aim of any fire sacrifice is to ultimately seek liberation and deliverance from this entrapping world of delusions and transmigration, a Sanyasi's vow of renouncing the world and breaking away free from its shackles is deemed to be a 'fire sacrifice' offered to that supreme Soul of the Universe, the *Vaishwanar* Atma. Hence it is also called *Vaishwanar Yagya*.

<sup>3</sup>The son is not to be seen as an offspring produced by a biological process and having a physical gross existence, but as an embodiment of the vast cosmos as well as the macrocosmic soul or Brahm. By equating him with the fire sacrifice, the Sanyasi offers to him all his worldly possessions of wealth, household and property as done during a sacrifice ritual when a man gives away alms and charities. Once they have been symbolically offered to the Fire-God and physically given away as alms to priests and others, the person 'ceases to possess' them and loses all attachments to those assets which no longer belong to him now. Similarly, by offering everything to his son as a gesture of performing the fire sacrifice done to obey the tenets of the scriptures and in tune with the laws of nature which mandate that the person should pass on the baton of his household and worldly responsibility to his son to carry forward the cycle of creation, the aspirant Sanyasi ceases to possess all worldly assets from that instant. For all practical purposes, all the assets that he had possessed till that time have now been given to his son as alms or charity or offerings made during the ritual of fire sacrifice.

This offering to the symbolic fire sacrifice in the form of giving away everything to the son is a metaphor for passing of the responsibility to the heir which is another way of saying that the Sanyasi has given the baton of his worldly responsibilities to his son for continuing forward the process of creation to the next generation as destined by the creator.

<sup>4</sup>In this case, the implied meaning is that he just abandons his household and worldly attachments and leaves them behind to whosoever wishes to take up his responsibilities along with his assets after he has gone away from the household and taken to the path of a Sanyasi. If he can find a competent heir, so far so good; in case not, he should just leave everything behind to take care for themselves. This paragraph



shows the intensity and sincerity of renunciation that a Sanyasi should possess —there should not be the slightest attraction or attachment to the material things of the world that the Sanyasi leaves behind; he should not at all worry about what would happen after taking to the vows of renunciation as a Sanyasi.]

\*\_\_\*\_\_\*\_\_\*

## Canto 2

चत्वारिंशत्संस्कारसंपन्नः सर्वतो विरक्तश्चित्तशुद्धिमेत्याशासूयेर्ष्याहंकारं दग्ध्वा  
साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्न एव संन्यस्तुमर्हति ॥१॥

catvāriṃśatsaṃskārasaṃpannaḥ sarvato virakṭaścittaśuddhimetyāśā-  
sūyersyāhamkāraṃ dagdhvā sādhanacatuṣṭayasampanna eva saṃnyastumar-  
hati // 1 //

Now, the basic and bare necessary virtues needed in a person to become eligible to accept Sanyas are being enumerated and discussed. One who is endowed with or is accomplished in the 40 types of virtues or accomplishments is only eligible to become a Sanyasi (or accept the path of Sanyas).

He should be completely dispassionate towards and detached from all persons and things pertaining to this world. He should keep his mind and intellect clean and uncorrupted. He should reduce to ashes (completely annihilate and forsake) Asha/Aashaa (hopes and expectations), Asuya/Asuyaa (envy, jealousy, malice, detractions), Irshya/Irshyaa (grudge, jealousy, envy, ill-will, malice) and Ahankar/Ahankaar (pride, ego, vanity, haughtiness, arrogance, hypocrisy).

He should possess the four noble characteristic of— (i) Vivek (judicious wisdom, intellect, erudition, discrimination ability), (ii) Vairagya (renunciation, dispassion, detachment, disinterest from all the desires to enjoy this world and its comforts, even the comforts of heaven), (iii) the six so-called spiritual wealths<sup>1</sup>, and (iv) Mumukshu (sincere and strong desire for liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation of the soul). Only such a person is eligible to accept Sanyas (1).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The so-called six spiritual wealths are the following — (a) Sham (self restraint, control) (b) Dam (forbearance, tolerance, patience), (c) Uprati (renunciation, detachment, dispassion), (d) Titiksha (endurance, sufferance, patience), (e) Samaadhan (solution and answer to all confusions and doubts), and (f) Shraddha (faith, reverence, belief, conviction).]

संन्यासे निश्चयं कृत्वा पुनर्न च करोति यः । स कुर्यात्कृच्छ्रमात्रं तु पुनः संन्यस्तुमर्हति ॥२॥

saṃnyāsaṃ niścayaṃ kṛtvā punarṇa ca karoti yaḥ / sa kuryātkṛcchramātraṃ  
tu punaḥ saṃnyastumarhati // 3 //

A seeker/aspirant who first decides to take to Sanyas and then goes back on his decision (i.e., rescinds on his decision to become a Sanyasi or aborts it midway), then he has to do severe Tapa (austerities and penances) to accept Sanyas once again (2).

संन्यासं पातयेद्यस्तु पतितं न्यासयेत्तु यः । सन्यासविघ्नकर्ता च त्रीनेतान्यति—तान्विदुः ॥३॥

saṃnyāsaṃ pātayedyaṣtu patitaṃ nyāsayettu yaḥ / saṃnyāsavighnakartā ca  
trīnetānpatitānviduḥ // 3 //

A person who (i) does not uphold (live up to) the rigorous vows of Sanyas after taking them, (ii) who initiates a fallen (i.e., degraded, pervert, vile, sinful, corrupt, wicked, evil, mean, lowly, impostor, insincere and unworthy) man into the path of Sanyas, (iii) and who creates an obstacle/hindrane into taking to the path of Sanyas by others— these three types of persons are considered contemptible, sinful, denigrated, fallen, unrighteous and unworthy (3).

अथ षण्डः पतितोऽङ्गविकलः स्त्रैणो बधिरोऽर्भको मूकः पाषाण्डश्चक्री लिङ्गी  
कुष्ठी वैखानसहरद्विजौ भृतकाध्यापकः शिपिविष्टोऽनग्निको नास्तिको वैराग्यवन्तोऽप्येते  
न संन्यासार्हाः । संन्यस्ता यद्यपि महावाक्योपदेशे नाधिकारिणः ॥४॥

atha ṣaṇḍaḥ patito'ṅgavikalaḥ straiṇo badhiro'rbhako mūkaḥ pāṣaṇḍāścakrī  
liṅgī kuṣṭhī vaikhānasaharadvijau bhṛtakādhyāpakaḥ śipiviṣṭo'nagniko nāstiko  
vairāgyavanto'pyete na saṃnyāsārhaḥ / saṃnyastā yadyapi  
mahāvākyopadeśe nādhikāriṇaḥ // 4 //

The following persons are not eligible to take the vows of formal Sanyas even though they might be renunciates and detached persons— (a) those who are eunuchs or are impotent; (b) those who are fallen from the righteous path and are corrupt, pervert, sinful, lowly, mean, evil and wicked; (c) those who are deformed or physically handicapped or lack any properly functioning external body-parts; (d) those who have lustful and lascivious tendencies, are full of libido and promiscuity, and are womanizers; (e) those who are hard of hearing (or deaf); (f) those who are of an immature age, such as a boy or child; (g) those who are talkative and argumentative as well as tattlers, gossipers and loose-talkers; (h) those who are renegade, hypocrites, heretics, impostors, deceitful and rude; (i) those who are conspirators, indulge in scheming and conceit as well as back-biting; (j) those who are a patient of leprosy and other contagious diseases; (k) those who are sexually pervert and promiscuous; (l) those

who have fallen from the high stature of a hermit or an ascetic; (m) those who are a Brahmin but have become corrupted and fallen from there high stature of grace; (n) those who are teachers in the payroll of someone (i.e., are employed by or serve someone) because they will not be free to be uphold the stern vows of Sanyas and will have to obey their masters in order to fulfil their worldly duties; (o) those who are reckless in behaviour and do not have self control over their sense organs; (p) those who do not pay respects to and offer oblations and libations to the fire sacrifice; and (q) those who are unbelievers, atheists or heretics.

If they somehow become a Sanyasi, they do not become eligible and worthy to receive the full benefit of the preaching enshrined in the great sayings of the Vedas (i.e., such persons cannot fully appreciate the deep impact and profundity of the great teachings of the Vedas and other scriptures, and they treat them casually or perfunctorily. They doubt about their authenticity and veracity, and this leads to lack of conviction and faith which is detrimental to achieving success in Sanyas, because this is a very rigorous, stern and tough way of life and is not a joke to live. As a result they do not derive any permanent benefit from those great sayings which are supposed to inculcate enlightenment, self realisation and wisdom in a man, leading to his liberation and deliverance from the bondages of this entrapping and artificial materialistic world which has trapped him in its snare of illusions and ignorance, and providing him with a buoy that can salvage his life and bestow emancipation and salvation for his soul (4).

आरुढपतितापत्यं कुनखी श्यावदन्तकः । क्षयीतथाङ्गविकलो नैव संन्यस्तुमर्हति ॥५॥

ārūḍhapatitāpatyaṃ kunakhī śyāvadantakaḥ / kṣayītathāṅgavikalo naiva saṃnyastumarhati // 5 //

The following persons are also not eligible and worthy to accept the vows of Sanyas— (a) those who are off-springs of a lowly and fallen man; (b) those who have deformed or crippled nails; (c) those who have dirty and stinking teeth; (d) those who suffer from a degenerative disease such as Tuberculosis; (e) and those who are bodily deformed or handicapped in any way, etc. (5).

संप्रत्यवसितानां च महापातकिनां तथा । व्रात्यानामभिशस्तानां संन्यासं नैव कारयेत् ॥६॥

saṃpratyavasitānāṃ ca mahāpātakināṃ tathā / vrātyānāmaḥśastānāṃ saṃnyāsaṃ naiva kārayet // 6 //

The following persons should not be initiated into the path (and vows) of Sanyas— (a) those who suddenly develop dispassion towards the world (as for instance when some one loses some dear one or some property in a calamitous event or as a result of business loss, because this is a

temporary phase out of shock, and such persons will recover from their shocked phase, gradually lose their renunciation which would fade away, and eventually such persons revert back to their original former self of worldly involvements); (b) those who are great sinners, most vile, pervert, corrupt and lowly; (c) those who lack noble thoughts and virtues; (d) those who have a bad name (ignominy, ill fame) and are condemned in the world (6).

व्रतयज्ञतपोदानहोमस्वाध्यायवर्जितम् । सत्यशौचपरिभ्रष्टं संन्यासं नैव कारयेत् ।  
एते नार्हन्ति संन्यासमातुरेण विना क्रमम् ॥७॥

vratayajñatapodānahomasvādhyāyavarjitam / satyaśaucaparibhraṣṭam  
saṁnyāsam na kārayet / ete nārhanti saṁnyāsamātureṇa vinā kramam // 7 //

The following persons should not be normally initiated into the path (and vows) of Sanyas— (a) those who do not keep vows, do not fast (Vrat), do not perform fire sacrifices (Yagya), do not do Tapa (Tapa = observe austerities and penances), do not give charity or alms (Daan), do not offer oblations to the holy fire (Homa), and do not study the scriptures (Swaadhyaaya); as well as (b) those who lack truthfulness, honesty, purity, virtues and righteousness. Such persons can be ‘eager Sanyasi’ (i.e., they can pursue the path of Sanyas if they are sincere and eager about it) but under normal circumstance, they are not eligible for Sanyas par-se<sup>1</sup>. [See also verse no. 74.] (7).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>All such persons listed in these verses, who are generally not deemed to be eligible to take Sanyas, can do so if they are sincere, eager and honest in their desire to accept this way of life and atone for their past deeds, or any other factors that have made them ineligible in the first instance. The basic aim of the eligibility criterion is to admit only competent and sincere persons into that haloed precinct of this august institution of Sanyas. These Sanyasis are like beacons or light-houses for the rest of the world. If they themselves are not up to the mark, just imagine the moral and spiritual chaos and anarchy that the world would witness. Imagine if honoured monks in a monastery, who are so revered by the society and in whom the people repose so much faith and trust, should become lascivious, greedy, jealous, haughty and such like —say, how nasty and despicable that situation would be for the world. That is why only sincere, honest and competent people who have the correct attitude and aptitude for Sanyas are expected to become a Sanyasi or a monk, lest the whole edifice of holiness, piety, divinity, spirituality, morality, ethos etc. would come crumbling down.]

ॐ भूः स्वाहेति शिखामुत्पाद्य यज्ञोपवीतं बहिर्न निवसेत् । यशो बलं ज्ञानं वैराग्यं  
मेधां प्रयच्छेति यज्ञोपवीतं छित्त्वा ॐ भूः स्वाहेत्यप्सु वस्त्रं कटिसूत्रं च विसृज्य  
संन्यस्तं मयेति त्रिवारमभिमन्त्रयेत् ॥८॥

om bhūḥ svāheti śikhāmutpāṭya yajñopavītaṁ bahirna nivaset / yaśo balaṁ  
jñānaṁ vairāgyaṁ medhāṁ prayaccheti yajñopavītaṁ chittvā om bhūḥ  
svāhetyapsu vastraṁ kaṭisūyaṁ ca visrjya saṁnyastaṁ mayeti  
trivāramabhimantrayet // 8 //

Now, once the person decides to accept Sanyas, he should follow the following steps— he should cut off the tuft of hair on his head (Shikha) by pronouncing this Mantra—‘OM BHU SWAHA. OM Salutations! Oh Lord! Bless me with fame, strength, courage, knowledge, wisdom, enlightenment, renunciation, detachment and dispassion; bless me with refined intellect, prudence and understanding, as well as the power to discriminate between what is wrong and what is right; grant me wisdom and erudition’ —saying this, the Sanyasi should tear apart the sacred thread to pieces (i.e., discard it).

After that, he should offer his clothes and the waist band to any water body available (e.g., a lake, pond, river, stream etc.) by saying the following Mantra — ‘OM BHU SWAHA’ once again as above.

Finally, he should sincerely say, ‘I have taken to (or vowed to follow the path of) Sanyas’, three times. [Three times to ratify and declare his firm resolve to observe the vows of Sanyas most faithfully, rigidly and without wavering at all from it. When repeated three times, it becomes a proclamation of truth and a firm resolve and determination on the part of the Sanyasi.] (8).

[Note :- The Mantras ‘OM BHU SWAHA’ mean ‘OM salutations; I have offered such and such thing to the earth and the fire element’; the word SWAHA literally means ‘to get burnt to ashes’.]

संन्यासिनं द्विजं दृष्ट्वा स्थानाच्चलति भास्करः ।  
एष मे मण्डलं भित्त्वा परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥९॥

saṁnyāsinam dvijaṁ dr̥ṣṭvā sthānāccalati bhāskaraḥ /  
eṣa me maṇḍalaṁ bhittvā paraṁ brahmādhigacchati // 9 //

Seeing a Sanyasi and an exalted Brahmin, the Sun moves from its position (i.e., it gives him right of way to the heaven), wondering if they wish to pass through the solar system (or the environ or the area around the sun) and go to the space beyond it to merge or become one with the supreme, transcendental Brahm residing in the outer space<sup>1</sup> (9).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>That is, the sun gives a Sanyasi the right of way from the earth to the heavens, a path which symbolically passes through the solar system. So, the sun moves away with his chariot so as not to give him any trouble, create any hindrance in his path, and also to show reverence and respect to him. This is only a figure of speech, a metaphor to show that even heavenly bodies move at the sight of such exalted Sanyasi to show respect to him. They have such stupendous divine powers that they

can make impossible things possible and even the Gods give them honour and reverence.]

षष्टिं कुलान्यतीतानि षष्टिमागामिकानि च । कुलान्युद्धरते प्राज्ञः संन्यस्तमिति यो वदेत् ॥१०॥

ṣaṣṭiṃ kulānyatītāni ṣaṣṭimāgāmikāni ca /  
kulānyuddharate prājñaḥ saṁnyastamiti yo vadet // 10 //

The wise and enlightened person who proclaims sincerely ‘I have become a Sanyasi’ is able to deliver sixty generations of his dead ancestors of the past and sixty generations of the future, from this vast, deluding and entrapping ocean-like world of transmigration (or free them from the continuous cycle of birth and death) (10).

ये च संतानजा दोषा ये दोषा देहसंभवाः । प्रैषाग्निर्निर्दहेत्सर्वास्तुषाग्निरिव काञ्चनम् ॥११॥

ye ca santānajā doṣā ye doṣā dehasaṁbhavāḥ /  
praiṣāgnirnirdahetsarvāṁstuṣāgniriva kāñcanam // 11 //

A true Sanyasi reduces to ashes (annihilates) all the faults, shortcomings and blemishes that he had hereditary acquired from his forefathers, as well as those which he has generated or acquired himself during his lifetime, just like borax powder helps to clean gold when it is put in a fiercely burning fire (11).

सखा मा गोपायेति दण्डं परिग्रहेत् ॥१२॥

sakhā mā gopāyeti daṇḍaṁ parigrahet // 12 //

He should accept and hold the Sanyasi’s staff (rod) called a ‘Danda’, saying ‘come friend, you should always protect me!’<sup>1</sup> (12).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The staff is a symbol of Sanyas as well as a mild and harmless protective weapon for a Sanyasi. It accompanies the wandering mendicant ascetic and helps him to ward off stray cattle, dogs and other such small and petty things which can cause him harm. It also symbolically acts like a king’s sceptre or a policeman’s baton. It is the mark of his dignity, exalted stature, special authority and a symbol of his renunciations of this world and his nearness to supreme Brahman.]

दण्डं तु वैणवं सौम्यं सत्वचं समपर्वकम् । पुण्यस्थलसमुत्पन्नं नानाकल्मषशोधितम् ॥१३॥  
अदग्धमहतं कीटैः पर्वग्रन्थिविराजितम् । नासादघ्नं शिरस्तुल्यं भ्रुवोर्वा बिभृयाद्यतिः ॥१४॥

daṇḍam tu vaiṇavam saumyam satvacam samaparvakam /  
 puṇyasthalasamutpannam nānākalmaṣāśodhitam // 13 //  
 adagdhamaḥataṁ kīṭaiḥ parvagrānthivirājitaṁ /  
 nāsādaghnam śīrastulyam bhruvorvā bibhṛyādyatiḥ // 14 //

The staff or rod called ‘Danda’ should have the following characteristic features —it should be made of bamboo, should be straight, un-sheared and of even number of nodes (or knars). The bamboo must have its origin in a clean place or location, must not have spots or any mark of disease, must not be scorched or have any marks of being scarred or touched by fire, must not have been harmed by insects, warms, termites or any other wood eating parasite, and in length it should be not more than the height of the Sanyasi till the tip of the tuft of hairs on his head (13-14).

[Note: The *Bhikshuk Upanishad* of Shukla Yajur Veda, verse no. 3 says that all Bhaudak Sanyasis are to carry this Tridand in their hands.

The *Shatyayani Upanishad* of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, verse no. 10 states that a Sanyasi should hold a Tridanda in his hands as it is prescribed by the Vedas. This Tridanda is a symbol that distinguishes a Sanyasi from the rest of the society. It symbolises that he has chosen the path of liberation and deliverance, that he has moral and spiritual authority, and that he has learnt to practice self-discipline and self-restraint.

Refer also to *Naradparivrajak Upanishad* of Atharva Veda, Canto 5, verse no. 13 which says that a Sanyasi should always carry a Tridand in his hand, while its Canto 6, verse no. 9 describes who a genuine Tirdanda Sanyasi is as follows—“A true Parivrajak or Sanyasi holding the ‘Tridand’ is one who has exercised his control over the Vaani (speech), the Mana (mind) and the Karma (deeds).”

The spiritual significance and importance of the Tridanda is highlighted in Narad Parivrajak Upanishad, Canto 6, verse no. 9. This Upanishad is Chapter no. 5.1 of this Book.]

दण्डात्मनोस्तु संयोगः सर्वथा तु विधीयते । न दण्डेन विना गच्छेद्विषुक्षेपत्रयं बुधः ॥१५॥

daṇḍātmanostu saṁyogaḥ sarvathā tu vidhīyate /  
 na daṇḍena vinā gacchedviṣukṣepatrayaṁ budhaḥ // 15 //

There should be harmony, compatibility or constant company of the Atma of the Sanyasi, which is his true identity, and his ‘Danda’ (staff or rod). Therefore, a Sanyasi should not go beyond a distance covered by an arrow shot three times, one after another, without being accompanied by his ‘Danda’<sup>1</sup> (15).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>That is, the maximum distance that a Sanyasi is expected to go without holding his ‘Danda’ should not be more than the average distance covered by an arrow shot three times over, once from the original spot, second from the place where the first shot has landed, and finally the third shot fired from the place or spot where the second shot has landed. The third and final landing spot or place of the arrow is the

maximum distance which a Sanyasi is ordained to travel from the original place without holding his 'Danda'. This is a metaphorical way of saying that a Sanyasi should stay close to his Atma represented by his staff or rod which always accompanies him. He should remain concentrated on his Atma and the supreme Brahm. In case he has to divert his attention away from such constant contemplation upon the Atma —such as to attend to nature's call, or go out to beg and seek food as alms, or to sleep —then in all such cases, the duration of time should be kept at a minimum possible, and he should revert back to meditation as soon as possible.]

जगज्जीवनं जीवनाधारभूतं मा ते मा मन्त्रयस्व सर्वदा सर्वसौम्येति कमण्डलुं परिगृह्य  
योगपट्टाभिषिक्तो भूत्वा यथासुखं विहरेत् ॥१६॥

jagajjīvanam jīvanādhārabhūtaṁ mā te mā mantrayasva sarvasaumyeti  
kamaṇḍaluṁ parigrhya yogapaṭṭābhiṣikto bhūtvā yathāsukhaṁ vihareṭ // 16  
//

Picking up his 'Kamandalu' (a pot made of hollowed-out pumpkin, or made of wood), he should address it as follows — 'Oh the eternal holder of nectar<sup>1</sup>! You hold water which is the foundation (or essential ingredient) of life. Keep in constant contact with me'.

Holding the Kamandalu, the Sanyasi should attire himself in clothes befitting his stature as a Sanyasi, and cheerfully and freely, without letting any obstacle come his way, wander here and there, wherever he wishes (16).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The words *Sarwasumya* literally mean 'the one who embodies all the virtues and goodness associated with being calm, sober, tranquil, peaceful, attractive, beautiful and enchanting'. The word also means 'the moon' which not only symbolises these characteristics, but also is the pitcher of nectar or the elixir of the Gods called 'Som'. Since 'Som' is a liquid providing eternity and bliss, and is the divine liquid drunk by the Gods, it symbolises 'water' without which life cannot be sustained. Here it simply means that the Sanyasi requests the 'Kamandalu' to always accompany him in his wanderings so that he is never thirsty and has not to die of thirst. It also means symbolically that he invokes the supreme elixir of life to bless him with eternity and bliss.]

त्यज धर्ममधर्मं च उभे सत्यानृते त्यज । उभे सत्यानृते त्यक्त्वा येन त्यजसि तत्त्यज ॥१७॥

tyaja dharmamadharmam ca ubhe satyānṛte tyaja /  
ubhe satyānṛte tyaktvā yena tyajasi tattyaja // 17 //

A Sanyasi should forsake/discard/abandon all indulgences and abstain from getting involved at all in anything, whether it be righteous, noble and



virtuous or not, whether it is truthful or not. [That is, he should not allow himself to be involved in any sort of activity pertaining to this world which can either cause resentment, perplexity, regrets or remorse in him, or give him joy or happiness. He should be totally free from any emotions and remain even, unruffled and dispassionate under all circumstances.]

In due course of time, he should even forsake/discard the company of those who do not allow themselves to be involved in anything as motioned above<sup>1</sup> (17).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>In other words, a true Sanyasi should become inert to, aloof from and inane towards all types of external stimuli originating from this mundane world which might affect his peace and tranquillity, his serenity and calmness of mind and demeanours. He should gradually inculcate in him total indifference to whether a thing is good or bad, true or false. He should behave as if he is dumb, deaf, stupid and ignorant in such matters. And in due course of time, as his spiritual pursuit enhances his mental stature, he should forsake even the company of other people who are like him, i.e., other Sanyasis. He should lead a lonely life and avoid the company of even other Sanyasis. This will give him more time to contemplate and meditate without any disturbance whatsoever. While alone, he would not need to talk with anyone, and there would be no one to cause any kind of agitation or restlessness in his mind.]

वैराग्यसंन्यासी ज्ञानसंन्यासी ज्ञानवैराग्यसंन्यासी । कर्मसंन्यासीति चातुर्विध्यमुपागतः ॥१८॥

vairāgyasaṁnyāsī jñānasaṁnyāsī jñānavairāgyasaṁnyāsī /  
karmasaṁnyāsīti cāturvidhyamupāgataḥ // 18 //

Sanyasis are classified into four categories/types— (i) Vairagya Sanyasi, (ii) Gyan Sanyasi, (iii) Gyan-Vairagya Sanyasi, and (iv) Karma Sanyasi (18).

तद्यथेति । दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवैतृष्यमेत्य ।  
प्राक्पुण्यकर्मविशेषात्संन्यस्तः स वैराग्यसंन्यासी ॥१९॥

tadyatheti dr̥ṣṭānuśravikaviṣayavaitṛṣṇyametya /  
prākpūṇyakarmaviśeṣātsaṁnyastah sa vairāgyasaṁnyāsī // 19 //

A ‘Vairagya Sanyasi’ is one who has no desires, passions or yearnings for any object of the visible world, or even an imaginary world, which has come down as tradition through the ages and heard about, and in whom ‘Vairagya’ (renunciation, dispassion, detachment, aloofness and total indifference to the world) has sprouted (arisen) due to the cumulative good effects of all the virtuous deeds done by him in his earlier and/or past lives. If such person accepts the vows of Sanyas, then he is classified as a ‘Vairagya Sanyasi’ or a Sanyasi who has adopted the path because he

has developed total renunciation, indifference and detachment towards this artificial and materialistic world (19).

शास्त्रज्ञानात्पापपुण्यलोकानुभवश्रवणात्प्रपञ्चोपरतो देहवासनां । शास्त्रवासनां  
लोकवासनां त्यक्त्वा वमनान्नमिव प्रवृत्तिं सर्वं हेयं मत्वा साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नो  
यः संन्यस्यति स एवं ज्ञानसंन्यासी ॥२०॥

śāstrajñānātpāpapuṇyalokānubhavaśravaṇātprapañcoparato dehavāsanām /  
śāstravāsanām lokavāsanām tyaktvā vamanānnamiva pravṛttiṁ sarvaṁ  
heyaṁ matvā sādhanacatuṣṭayasampanno yaḥ saṁnyasyati sa eva jñāna-  
saṁnyāsī // 20 //

A ‘Gyan Sanyasi’ is the one who adopts the path of Sanyas based on his discriminating intellect and wisdom. This happens when he has acquired the truthful knowledge enshrined in the scriptures, has heard about the various sins and faults as well as the good and virtuous qualities, has witnessed all that the delusory, artificial, entrapping and sorrowful world has to offer, who has risen above all the worldly imposturing, deceit, conceit, falsehoods and delusions, who has forsaken all the Vasanas (allurements, passions, attachments, lusts, attraction, yearnings and desires associated with the body<sup>1</sup>, associated with the scripture<sup>2</sup> and associated with the world<sup>3</sup>), who regards all worldly pursuits as nothing better than vomited food (i.e., he despises them and treats all worldly pursuits with contempt and abhors them), and who takes to the path of Sanyas after acquiring the 4 noble wealths<sup>4</sup> (which would support and sustain him and help him in his chosen path of Sanyas).

A person who takes the vows of Sanyas with these qualities in him after his intellect and wisdom has fully prepared him to see behind the smoke screen of Maya<sup>5</sup> (delusions, illusions and their accompanying ignorance and problems) represented by this world, to see the real essence of things rather than be misled by the external illusionary façade, is called a ‘Gyan Sanyasi’, or one who has become a renunciate ascetic after he has acquainted himself with the futility of pursuing this artificial, materialistic world, of the despicable and abhorable nature of this perishable body, of the disgusting torments that are associated with the endless cycle of birth and death and the need to break free from this vicious cycle, of the transient and perishable nature of worldly enjoyments, pleasures and sensual gratifications, and of the need to realise the ‘truth’ behind the smoke-screen of falsehoods associated with this world (20).

[Note :- ‘The ‘Vasanas’ pertaining to the body relate to the attachments that one has with one’s son, property and wealth which a person has acquired and enjoyed with his body, and the world around him —his relatives, his fame, his contacts, his friends, his obligation, contracts and responsibilities. It also means gratification of the sense organs of the body as well as to appease those who are related to him with this body so that they continue to serve and help him and give comfort and pleasure to his body.

<sup>2</sup>The 'Vasanas' pertaining to the scriptures relate to the desire and passion for studying them more and more, acquiring scholarship, expertise and the accompanying fame and money through them, relying too much on the letter of the scriptures and not their spirit, engrossing oneself in endless discussions and debates leading to confusions and contradictions. The scriptures are vast and like a fathomless sea. Trying to realise the Supreme Truth by delving into the depths of the scriptures is like an attempt at extracting pearl by churning the ocean. Though it is theoretically possible, but practically it is impossible.

<sup>3</sup>The 'Vasanas' relating to the world are the various attractions and allurements that this apparently enchanting and captivating world presents to a person, drawing him like iron to a magnet. It also refer to the various and endless responsibilities and obligations, real and imaginary, that a person has, or imagines he has, towards this world.

<sup>4</sup>The word 'Gyan' means enlightenment, wisdom, erudition and the truthful knowledge about the absolute and incontrovertible reality. So a person who takes to Sanyas relying on his intellect and wisdom which wisen him on the futility of this world and enlightens him to the absolute and pristine Truth, and which inspires him to pursue the absolute and irrefutable Truth through the path of total renunciation and detachment, is called a *Gyan Sanyasi*. This is in sharp contrast to becoming a Sanyasi due to circumstantial compulsions, sudden burst of emotion or as an impulsive reaction or response to such compelling circumstances or emotions which cause so much mental stress on a man that for some time he becomes totally disinterested, disoriented, disillusioned and disenchanted with life. But as the effect of this disenchantment caused by stress fades and wears away, his detachment and indifference also fades and wears off, and by and by he once again plunges back head-on in pursuing the objects he had always been pursuing before this transient phase of renunciation had overtaken him. Such circumstantial renunciations are like storms in a cup of tea that have no substance. Sometimes a person becomes a Sanyasi as a means to impress others or escape from facing the harsh difficulties and realities of the world; they are imposters and deceitful.

<sup>5</sup>*Maya* is a word which has two parts, Ma + Ya. The first half 'Ma' means 'to measure, mark off, by any standard; to show, to exhibit, to display; to infer, to conclude; to be formed, built, made of', while the second part 'Ya' means 'this or that'. Therefore the composite word *Maya* means neither this nor that; anything that is not real; that which is delusionary, illusionary, deceptive, mirage like and deceitful, and is caused by the ignorance about its truth and reality; something that has no substance or pith; displays no certainty and leads to wrong inference. The term *Maya* is used to define all these phenomenon. Hence, *Maya* is a synonym used for all that is deceptive, faulty, false, deluding, ignorance based, illusionary, imposter, deceitful, invisible and para-natural; all that which has no reality or substance; all that is hollow.

*Maya* has three basic constituent qualities. Hence it is called 'Trigunmayi', i.e., one which has the three Gunas or qualities. These three Gunas or qualities are— Sat, Raj and Tam. 'Sat' is the most

auspicious, virtuous and noblest quality in a man and raises him to a high moral and spiritual pedestal. It marks predominance of righteousness and the highest standards of spirituals and mental evolvement leading to high thoughts, noble actions and righteous behaviour. ‘Raj’ is the medium quality in a person, and it is marked by worldly passions, desires, yearnings and greed. It makes a man more worldly than spiritual. ‘Tam’ is the third and most lowly of the three qualities and is used as a synonym for darkness and evil. Obviously, ‘Tam’ means ignorance, delusions and all the forces or qualities that are evil, mean, lowly, miserly, wicked and base. They pull down a man from high pedestal and virtually dump him in the dust yard of creation to rust and decay.

These three qualities together, in various permutations and combinations, decide the innate nature of a man. The greater presence of ‘Sat’ makes a man nobler as compared to a high ratio of ‘Tam’ which makes him wicked, pervert and evil. Various proportions of these qualities will therefore produce innumerable varieties of creatures having different temperaments, thought processes, behaviours, demeanours and mental setup in this world.]

क्रमेण सर्वमभ्यस्य सर्वमनुभूय ज्ञानवैराग्याभ्यां स्वरूपानुसंधानेन देहमात्रावशिष्टः  
संन्यस्य जातरुपधरो भवति स ज्ञानवैराग्यसंन्यासी ॥२१॥

krameṇa sarvamabhyasya sarvamanubhūya jñānavairāgyābhyāṃ  
svarūpānusandhānena dehamātrāvaśiṣṭaḥ saṁnyasya jātārūpadharo bhavati  
sa jñānavairāgyasaṁnyāsī // 21 //

A ‘Gyan-Vairagya Sanyasi’ is the one who is endowed with both the virtues of ‘Gyan’ as well as ‘Vairagya’ (see verse no. 20 and 19 respectively). He has practiced both these virtues, he has witnessed and experienced everything worth witnessing and experiencing in this world, he has fully understood and have had deep insight into the truthful meaning and essence of the concept of both ‘Gyan’ and ‘Vairagya’, and who treats this body as a residual entity or a remnant of the actual essence of the creature called his ‘true identity or pure self (Atma/soul)’.

A person wise enough to think so, and who takes the path of Sanyas full of wisdom, realisation and enlightenment (called Gyan) as well as renunciation, dispassion and detachment (called Vairagya), both of which have taken firm root in his mind and heart. Such a person is called a true ‘Gyan-Vairagya Sanyasi’ (21).

ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भूत्वा वानप्रस्थाश्रममेत्य वैराग्याभावेऽप्याश्रमक्रमानुसारेण यः  
संन्यस्यति स कर्मसंन्यासी ॥२२॥

brahmacaryaṃ samāpya gr̥hī bhūtvā vānaprasthāśramametya vairāgyābhāve-  
‘pyāśramakramānusāreṇa yaḥ saṁnyasyati sa karmasaṁnyāsī // 22 //

A ‘Karma Sanyasi’ is the one who accepts the path of Sanyas as a way of life ordained by tradition and scriptures at the end of the other 3 phases of life which are Brahmacharya, Grihastha and Vaanprastha Ashrams respectively, although he might not have inculcated complete and honest renunciation, detachment and dispassion as developed by the first type of Sanyasi called ‘Vairagya Sanyasi’ (see verse no. 19) in whom it is in-born, as well as the second type of Sanyasi called ‘Gyan Sanyasi’ (see verse no. 20) in whom it is inculcated by wisdom, learning and enlightenment.

A ‘Karma Sanyasi’ becomes a Sanyasi just because it is a part of established tradition and his duty as a righteous person who is expected to pursue this way of life at the culmination of the other 3 phases of life. He becomes a Sanyasi because it is his ‘Karma’ or duty to do so at the end of his life as mandated by tradition or scriptures. [see also verse no. 74.] (22).

स संन्यासः षड्विधो भवति कुटीचकबहूदकहंस । परमहंसतुरीयातीतावधूताश्चेति ॥२३॥

sa samnyāsaḥ ṣaḍvidho bhavati kuṭīcakabahūdakahamṣa /  
paramahamṣaturīyātītāvadhūtāśceti // 23 //

Again, a Sanyasi can be further classified into six sub-categories or types each having its distinctive features or characteristics— (i) Kutichak, (ii) Bahudak, (iii) Hans, (iv) Paramhans, (v) Turiyatit/Turiyaateet, and (vi) Avadhuta (23).

कुटीचकः शिखायज्ञोपवीती दण्डकमण्डलुधरः कौपीनशाटीकन्थाधरः  
पितृमातृगुरुवार्धनपरः पिठरखनित्रशिख्यादिमात्रसाधनपर एकत्रान्नादनपरः  
श्वेतोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधारी त्रिदण्डः ॥२४॥

kuṭīcakaḥ śikhāyajñopavīti daṇḍakamaṇḍaludharaḥ kaupīnaśāṭīkanthādharaḥ  
pitṛmātrgurvārādhanaḥ piṭharakhanitraśikhyādimātrasādhanaḥ  
ekatrānnādanaparaḥ śvetordhvapuṇḍradhārī tridaṇḍaḥ // 24 //

A ‘Kutichak Sanyasi’ has the following characteristic features —he wears a tuft of hairs on his head (called a ‘Shikha’ or a ‘Choti’), and the sacred thread is slung across his neck and shoulder, passing over this chest in a diagonal fashion. Besides this, he carries a ‘Danda’ (a staff or a rod) and ‘Kamandalu’ (a water pot). He wears a loin cloth and a garment made of patted cotton shreds, covers himself with an ordinary sheet, and he worships his parents and Guru (who is his moral preceptor). Besides the above, he also carries a wide-mouthed pot to cook food, a light pick-axe or a spade and a latticed sling bag to carry his things along. He eats at a single place (i.e., once a day), wears a vertical mark of a trident on his

forehead (as a Tilak Mark), and holds a wooden trident (the ‘Tridanda’ that is typically made of three sticks of bamboo tied together) in his hands as well (24).

बहूदकः शिखादिकन्थाधरस्त्रिपुण्ड्रधारी । कुटीचकवत्सर्वसमो इ मधुकरवृत्त्याष्टकवलाशी ॥२५॥

bahūdakaḥ śikhādikanthādharastripuṇḍradhārī /  
kuṭīcakavatsarvasamo i madhukaravṛtṭyāṣṭakavalāśī / 25 //

A ‘Bahudak Sanyasi’ is the one who wears a tuft, garments of patted cotton shreds, and has a trident mark on his forehead etc. He sustains himself by begging for cooked food, and eats only eight mouthfuls (25).

[Note :- A ‘Kutichak’ Sanyasi cooks his own meals and eats his full, while a ‘Bahudak’ Sanyasi begs for food and eats only eight mouthfuls.]

हंसो जटाधारी त्रिपुण्ड्रोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधारी । असंकल्पमाधुकरान्नाशी कौपीनखण्डतुण्डधारी ॥२६॥

haṁso jaṭādhārī tripuṇḍrordhvapuṇḍradhārī /  
asaṁkṛptamādhūkarānnāśī kaupīnakhaṇḍatuṇḍadhārī // 26 //

A ‘Hans Sanyasi’ wears long lock of hairs matted on his head (called a ‘Jata’) like thick coiled coir, and has the mark of a trident on his forehead as well as on his heart and upper arms. He begs for food at an unknown place (i.e., he begs from a new household each time), and wears nothing else accepts the loin cloth (26).

[Note :- A ‘Hans’ Sanyasi wears a crown of matted hairs instead of a tuft on a tonsured head, has the mark of a trident on his body besides the forehead, and wears only a loin cloth instead of covering the other parts of the body with a garment or cloak of patted cotton shreds.]

परमहंसः शिखायज्ञोपवीतरहितः पञ्चगृहेषु करपात्री एककौपीनधारी ।  
शाटीमेकामेकं वैणवं दण्डमेकशाटीधरो वा भस्मोद्धूलनपरः सर्वत्यागी ॥२७॥

paramahaṁsaḥ śikhāyajñopavītarahitaḥ pañcagr̥heṣu karapātrī  
ekakaupīnadhārī /  
śāṭīmekāmekam vaiṇavam daṇḍamekaśāṭīdharo vā bhasmoddhūlanaparah  
sarvatyāgī // 27 //

A ‘Paramhans Sanyasi’ (who is superior to ‘Hans’) does not keep a tuft of hairs on his head, and the sacred thread on his body is also discarded. He begs from only five households and eats out of his hands (i.e., from his cupped palms. See also verse no. 95). He keeps only a loin cloth, a sheet of cloth to cover his body, and a bamboo stick (as a staff or rod).

Alternatively, he rubs/smears his body with ash from the fire sacrifice and keeps it (the body) wrapped by a piece of (ordinary and tattered rag-like) cloth. In this case, he abandons all others possessions which other types of Sanyasi can carry. [See verse no. 24-26.] (27).

तुरीयातीतो गोमुखवृत्त्या फलाहारी अन्नाहारी ।  
चेद्गृहत्रये देहमात्रावशिष्टो दिगम्बरः कुणपवच्छरीरवृत्तिकः ॥२८॥

turiyātīto gomukhavṛtṭyā phalāhārī annāhārī /  
cedgrhatraye dehamātrāvaśiṣṭo digambaraḥ kuṇapavaccharīravṛttikaḥ // 28 //

A ‘Turiyatit Sanyasi’ is the one who renounces everything. He lives like a cow—humble, submissive, non-aggressive, docile, merciful, compassionate, holy and revered. He also eats like a cow—opens his mouth and fills it directly with food without the use of his fingers (see verse no. 95).

He accepts fruits or cooked food from only three households. He keeps himself naked (like a cow). He considers his body as good as dead, loses all interest in it, and sustains himself somehow till his end (death) comes naturally to him. [See verse no. 76-82 also.] (28).

अवधूतस्त्वनियमः पतिताभिः शस्तवर्जनपूर्वकं सर्ववर्णेष्वजगरवृत्त्याहारपरः

स्वरूपानुसंधानपरः ॥२९॥

जगत्तावदिदं नाहं सवृक्षतृणपर्वतम् । यद्बाह्यं जडमत्यन्तं तत्स्यां कथमहं विभुः ।

कालेनाल्पेन विलयी देहो नाहमचेतनः ॥३०॥

avadhūtaṣṭvanīyamaḥ patitābhiśastavarjanapūrvakaṁ sarvavarṇeṣvajagara-  
vṛtṭyāhāraparaḥ svarūpānusandhānaparaḥ // 29 //

jagattāvadidaṁ nāhaṁ savṛkṣatṛṇaparvatam / yadbāhyaṁ jaḍamatyantam  
tatsyāṁ kathamahaṁ vibhuḥ / kālenālpena vilayī deho nāhamacetanaḥ // 30 //

An ‘Avadhut Sanyasi’ does not follow any set rules or codes of conduct and behaviour. He lives the life of a python —remaining inert and inactive, eating only when hungry, and that also what comes his way instead of begging for food from house to house. He eats anything except those things which are despicable, contemptible, reviled and absolutely absurd to eat (e.g., fecal matters). He keeps himself ever engrossed in the search of his pure and truthful ‘self’ (which is pure conscious Atma, by contemplating and meditating upon it).

He thinks thus— ‘This external world consisting of this tree, grass, mountain etc. is different and separate from me (i.e., I do not belong to this gross and artificial world of illusionary enchantment having such and such things of false beauty). Whatever is visible in the external world is all very gross, inane, lifeless, vain and worthless. How is it possible for

me to stay and live in it, for I am so vast, fathomless, macrocosmic and infinite in my truthful nature? I am not created by or cannot be imagined to belong to any dimension of time —the past, the present and the future (i.e., I am eternal, infinite and without a beginning or an end). At the same time, I don't easily dissolve or vanish into nothingness (i.e., my existence is a certainty, a matter of fact, an established truth) and its final annihilation, when ever it comes, will be a once-and-for-all affair and not like the continuous cycle of birth and death as suffered by the other mortal creatures of this world (29-30).

[Note :- The abode where these different types of Sanyasi live and find rest is described in verse no. 74 below.]

जडया कर्णशष्कुल्या कल्यमानक्षणस्थया । शून्याकृतिः शून्यभवः शब्दो नाहमचेतनः ॥३१॥

jaḍayā karnaśaṣkulyā kalyamānakṣaṇasthayā /  
śūnyākṛtiḥ śūnyabhavaḥ śabdo nāhamacetanaḥ // 31 //

I (the Sanyasi) am not like that lifeless 'word' which has only a momentary life. When spoken, a word exists or lasts for a fraction of time while it is being spoken, only to vanish the next moment. Since I am eternal and timeless, this simile does not apply to me. Similarly, I am also not 'the one without a form and shape, living in a void', and at the same time I am also not 'one who has a form but lacks consciousness'. In short, I am none of it, but am pure consciousness (31).

[Note :- In short, the Sanyasi tries to comprehend who he actually is, i.e., he tries to search his true identify. He compares himself with each of the five basic elements that constitute the creation as well as the five basic senses of perception that distinguish a living entity from a non-living entity. To begin with, there was the cosmic 'Naad' transformed in the word OM. The word 'word' here in this verse does not mean the eternal OM, but the other worldly sounds and words which have emerged from this eternal sound and word. These worldly sounds and words are perishable because the words spoken by a man has only a fleeting and momentary existence; they are not like the eternal cosmic sound called 'Naad' representing the vibration energy of the imperishable Brahm who is also known as 'Akshar'. This word has two connotations —viz., something which is imperishable, and a letter. The 'worldly word' is transient, momentary and fleeting, while the 'cosmic word' is eternal and imperishable. So the Sanyasi is playing with the word 'word' here to mean two different things —one, that he is eternal like the divine word OM as well as not perishable like the worldly words spoken by a person. The 2<sup>nd</sup> character is the 'form-less supreme soul', who is said to live in heaven situated in the space beyond the solar system. The 3<sup>rd</sup> character is 'the creature with a physical and gross body harbouring the live soul' in its bosom. The Sanyasi essentially says that he is eternal and permanent, hence not the perishable word. He has a physical body, hence he is not without a form like Brahm. He is living and moving, hence he isn't inanimate part of creation like a tree or a mountain.]



त्वचा क्षणविनाशिन्या प्राप्योऽप्राप्योऽयमन्यथा ।  
चित्प्रसादोपलब्धात्मा स्पर्शो नाहमचेतनः ॥३२॥

tvacā kṣaṇavināśīnyā prāpyo'prāpyo'yamanyathā /  
citprasādopalabdhātmā sparśo nāhamacetanaḥ // 32 //

The 'skin', which can be destroyed in a second and which is subject to wear and decay, repair and regeneration, is also distinct from me. [That is, the skin which gives a shape, outline, colour and other features to my body is also not my identity; it is not my real and true self. I am imperishable, without a form, not subject to any diseases etc. whereas the skin has all these characteristic faults and shortcomings.]

I am also not that perception which is known as 'touch' which in itself is lifeless but is activated only by the presence of the Atma which infuses life into the skin in the form of the sense of 'feeling'. Further, since the perception of touch depends upon the skin to become active and effective, it has no relevance to me simply because the skin is not mine and not 'me', and therefore, the sense of touch generated by the skin is also not felt by me and is not 'me'. I am not the skin, for I am pure consciousness (whereas the skin is gross and without any essence in the absence of the Atma) and neither and am I the 'touch or feelings' that distinguish between a dead skin and a live skin. I am none of them! (32).

लब्धात्मा जिह्वया तुच्छो लोलया लोलसत्तया ।  
स्वल्पस्पन्दो द्रव्यनिष्ठो रसो नाहमचेतनः ॥३३॥

labdhātmā jihvayā tuccho lolayā lolasattayā /  
svalpaspando dravyaniṣṭho raso nāhamacetanaḥ // 33 //

The 'mind' characterised by restlessness, agitation, fickleness and constant state of flux is not my true identity. And neither am I the 'tongue' which is gross and inane except when it is driven by the mind and intellect to taste anything and feel the sense of taste itself. [Since the tongue has no life of its own as is evident from the fact that a man, when he is asleep, does not taste anything, and it is only inspired by the mind to become active and discern a particular taste, it cannot be my form because I do not require anyone else to tell me what to or what not to do; I do not require any other entity to inspire me to become active. I can act on my own and feel on my own and decide on my own.] I am not it (the tongue) because I am pure consciousness (whereas the tongue is lifeless and without any consciousness of its own) (33).

दृश्यदर्शनयोर्लीनं क्षयि क्षणविनाशिनोः । केवले द्रष्टरि क्षीणं रूपं नाहमचेतनः ॥३४॥

drśyadarśanayorlīnaṃ kṣayi kṣaṇavināśinoḥ /

kevale draṣṭari kṣīṇaṃ rūpaṃ nāhamacetanaṃ // 34 //

In a similar way, I am not the gross organ of the ‘eye’ which has no function or utility if the object or image which is seen as well as the faculty in the brain which enables the eye to carry out the function of seeing or observing, are de-linked from it (the eye). The eyes become as useless, lifeless, inane and vain as the tongue if they are not infused with their respective senses of sight and taste respectively by the brain of the creature. Hence, I am only a witness and observer to what I see and observe through the gross entity called the eye. I am pure consciousness (whereas the eye is lifeless and without any consciousness of its own) (34).

[Note :- This fact is very obvious. If our mind is diverted somewhere else, or if the centre in the brain which controls the function of sight is damaged, we may literally stare at things blankly without registering their presence. That is, we might be looking at any thing for hours, but we might not ‘actually see’ them in the sense that our mind has not registered that image. When asked to describe what we have seen in such a circumstance, we will fail to do so. A dead person’s eye might be wide open but he doesn’t see anything. So, obviously, eyes have no life and consciousness of their own. A totally blind person also lives without his eyes functioning for him. So, the eyes can never be the true identity of a living creature. Even if we were to argue that one cannot study or read without his eyes, this argument is erroneous because there are so many examples of erudite, wise and enlightened persons who were born blind or became blind later on in life, but still producing vast treasure of literature and preaching stupendous philosophies to the people. In the ‘Bhakti’ movement of northern India, the most famous example is saint Surdas, the great devotee of Lord Krishna, who was born blind. Then we have the example of Milton, the great poet who was also blind.]

नासया गन्धजडया क्षयिण्या परिकल्पितः । पेलवोऽनियताकारो गन्धो नाहमचेतनः ॥३५॥

nāsayā gandhajaḍayā kṣayiṇyā parikalpitaḥ /

pelavo’niyatākāro gandho nāhamacetanaḥ // 35 //

The perception of ‘smell’ has its origin from things which are gross and worldly. It is felt through the instrument of the ‘nose’. [That is, one cannot smell anything without a nose; the nose is merely a medium for the Atma to enjoy the perception of smell emanating from the gross objects of the external world.]

To ‘smell’, the creature depends upon another gross organ called the ‘nose’. The smell, therefore, is not my truthful form, because it

originates in the world of grossness; it needs a medium to be actively perceived, and it has no independent existence of its own because it is the brain which gives the sense of smell any meaning. I am neither the ‘smell’ nor the ‘nose’, for I am pure consciousness (whereas the nose and the perception of smell are not independent, they do not have their own lives, and they have to depend upon each other as well as the brain to make any sense out of them).

On the other hand, I am complete in my self; I do not need smell to survive. The smell needs the nose to be felt, whereas the nose needs the smell to be of any utility and value to the creature). I am independent! (35).

निर्ममोऽमननः शान्तो गतपञ्चेन्द्रियभ्रमः । शुद्धचेतन एवाहं कलाकलनवर्जितः ॥३६॥

nirmamo'mananaḥ śānto gatapañcendriyabhramaḥ /  
śuddhacetana evāhaṁ kalākalanavarjitaḥ // 36 //

I (the Sanyasi) am not misled by the illusion of the 5 sense organs and their sensory perceptions as a reflection of my true individuality and identity. I am also independent of the ‘mind’ and its activities such as thought. I am free from all blemishes, flaws and faults. On the contrary, I am an embodiment of pure and uncorrupted bliss. I am pure consciousness! (36).

चैत्यवर्जितचिन्मात्रमहमेषोऽवभासकः । सबाह्यभ्यन्तरव्यापी निष्कलोऽहं निरञ्जनः ।  
निर्विकल्पचिदाभास एक आत्मास्मि सर्वगः ॥३७॥

caityavarjitacinmātramahameṣo'vabhāsakaḥ /  
sabāhyābhyantaravyāpī niṣkalo'haṁ nirañjanaḥ /  
nirvikalpacidābhāsa eka ātmāsmi sarvagaḥ // 37 //

I (the Sanyasi) am even beyond being simply ‘consciousness’, for I am an embodiment of the very ‘light’ of self-realisation, enlightenment, wisdom and erudition. I am immanent and all pervading, present uniformly both outside as well as inside the creation, encompassing it and pervading it from everywhere. I am unchangeable and immutable; I am pure, holy, divine and faultless; I am unique, matchless and without a parallel or alternative; I am an image or reflection of the supreme Soul as it is reflected in the heart/bosom of the creature (i.e., the individual soul of the creature), and I am called the Atma or the Soul which is one in all the creatures of the creation and is universally present uniformly in them (37).

मयैव चेतनेनेमे सर्वे घटपटादयः । सूर्यान्ता अवभास्यन्ते दीपेनेवात्मतेजसा ॥३८॥

mayaiva cetaneneme sarve ghaṭapaṭādayaḥ /  
sūryāntā avabhāsyante dīpenevātmatejasā // 38 //

It is the light emanating and radiating from my conscious form that illuminates the whole world, right from the individual's heart to the celestial Sun in the sky; they are radiant and splendorous with my light<sup>1</sup> (38).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>To include the sun in the list of all those who are illuminated by the light emanating from the Atma is very significant —it establishes that the Atma which is referred to here is the basic energy or force which not only keeps the world going but also lightens the sun. We may call it the forces of Nature, we may call it the physical forces that regulate even the working of the atom, because the Atma is no larger than an atom, and this simile is very apt because the body represents the molecule of the gross elements which together constitute this world. All things, animate and inanimate, are made up of atoms. Each atom has its own internal world of electrons, protons, neutrons, photons etc.. They are not working haphazardly at random, but are regulated by some omnipotent, invisible and sublime force. This regulatory force which manifests itself and makes its presence felt by the sheer power it exerts in keeping everything in this universe in order —right from the inside of the atom to the boiling cauldron of the sun in the sky —is called the Atma by the Upanishadic sages and seers]

मयैवैताः स्फुरन्तीह विचित्रेन्द्रियवृत्तयः । तेजसान्तः प्रकाशेन यथाग्निकणपङ्क्तयः ॥३९॥

mayaivaitāḥ sphurantīha vicitrendriyavṛttayaḥ /  
tejasāntaḥ prakāśena yathāgnikaṇapaṅktayaḥ // 39 //

The various tendencies and habits of the different organs of the body, their characteristic features and activities, are all activated by the signals emanating from my (Sanyasi's) bosom/heart in the form of the life infusing consciousness. [That is, it is my soul or Atma that lends and injects life and enables these sense organs to function properly as living entities.]

The situation is similar to the sparks emanating and flying off from a vigorously burning and spluttering fire (39).

अनन्तानन्दसंभोगा परोपशमशालिनी । शुद्धेयं चिन्मयी दृष्टिर्जयत्यखिलदृष्टिषु ॥४०॥

anantānandasambhogā paropāśamaśālīnī /  
śuddheyam cinmayī drṣṭirjayat-yakḥiladrṣṭiṣu // 40 //

This light of enlightenment arises from the bosom and is present (located) there; it is universal and eternal; it provides bliss and happiness, peace and tranquillity to the creature. It is the supreme light or vision which supersedes all other visions or views<sup>1</sup> (40).

[Note :- 'This 'light of realisation, wisdom and enlightenment' coming out from the heart is the divine vision of the Atma which enables the seeker to have deep and penetrating powers of insight into the absolute truth and reality. Other forms of vision or sight include knowledge acquired by study, by seeing or observing, by smelling, by tasting, by feeling and touching, by witnessing and experiencing, by hearing etc. All these various sorts of information or knowledge acquired through the organs of perception of the body cannot match the sublime and subtle divine vision of enlightenment emanating from the heart enshrining the fount of such visions, which is the Atma.]

सर्वभावान्तरस्थाय चैत्यमुक्तचिदात्मने । प्रत्यक्चैतन्यरूपाय मह्यमेव नमो नमः ॥४१॥

sarvabhāvāntarasthāya caityamuktacidātmāne /  
pratyakcaitanyarūpāya mahyameva namo namaḥ // 41 //

The liberated soul encompasses all possible emotions, sentiments, perceptions, fancies, natures and inclinations of a creature. It is the eternal, infinite, conscious and enlightened Atma (“Chidaatma”) which has no temple or residence of its own (i.e., it cannot be trapped in the heart or body of a creature) (“Chaitya-mukta”). I bow before and show my respects to this Atma which is an embodiment of pure, cosmic and supreme Consciousness (“Chaitanya-roop”) (41).

विचित्राः शक्तयः स्वच्छाः समा या निर्विकारया ।  
चिता क्रियन्ते समया कलाकलनमुक्तया ॥४२॥  
कालत्रयमुपेक्षित्या हीनायाश्चैत्यबन्धनैः ।  
चितश्चैत्यमुपेक्षित्याः समतैवावशिष्यते ॥४३॥

vicitrāḥ śaktayaḥ svacchāḥ samā yā nirvikārayā /  
citā kriyante samayā kalākalanamuktayā // 42 //  
kālatrayamupekṣitryā hīnāyāścaityabandhanaiḥ /  
citaścaityamupekṣitryāḥ samataivāvaśiṣyate // 43 //

Out of this stupendous vital force of the Atma/soul—which is very mysterious, strange and remarkable, which is pure and incorruptible, which is immutable, steady, constant and uniform, and which is beyond imagination and comprehension—has emerged the driving force called intuition. All the vital forces of life, including intuition, faculty of discrimination and judgment, the various perceptions and their

corresponding responses in the form of directions and instructions emanating from the mind to the organs of action —are very strange and mysterious, but all of them have their origin in that Atma which is called ‘Chitta Shakti’ [The Chitta Shakti is the power of the super consciousness that drives the mind and the intellect of a creature at the micro-level of creation, and the entire universe at the cosmic and macro level of creation. It is a literal power-house of all activities and actions. It is a power derived from intuitive consciousness, the knowledge of God. It is the stupendous and eternal creative energy and vitality of the cosmos.]

This ‘Chitta Shakti’ is most stupendous, exceptionally fascinating, absolutely magnificent and very majestic in its powers and potentials; it is free from the fetters that tie an ordinary creature to the visible world of material objects (as this ‘Shakti’ or power represents the dynamism of the supreme Consciousness) (42-43).

सा हि वाचामगम्यत्वादसत्तामिव शाश्वतीम् । नैरात्मसिद्धात्मदशामुपयातैव शिष्यते ॥४४॥  
 ईहानीहामयैरन्तर्या चिदावलिता मलैः । सा चिन्नेत्पादितुं शक्ता पाशबद्धेव पक्षिणी ॥४५॥  
 इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन जन्तवः । धराविवरमग्नानां कीटानां समतां गताः ॥४६॥

sā hi vācāmagamyatvādasattāmiva śāśvatīm /  
 nairātmasiddhātmaśāma-mupa-yātaiva śiṣyate // 44 //  
 īhānīhāmayairantaryā cidāvalitā malaiḥ /  
 sā cinnotpādituṃ śaktā pāśabaddheva pakṣiṇī // 45 //  
 icchādveṣasamutthena dvandvamohena jantavaḥ /  
 dharāvivaramagnānāṃ kīṭānāṃ samatāṃ gatāḥ // 46 //

This ‘Chitta Shakti’ (the stupendous powers, potential and energy of consciousness that are the hallmarks) of the Atma/soul cannot be comprehended by the faculty of speech. [That is, words and speech are too incompetent and inept to describe it.] It is universal, eternal, authoritative and very endearing.

The ‘Chitta Shakti’, which is otherwise pure and of stupendous and magnificent powers, becomes maligned and tainted when it allows itself to be trapped and torn between having desires, wishes, yearnings, hopes and expectations pertaining to this world, and by the lack of them, even as a bird, which can otherwise fly freely in the sky, becomes unable to do so when tied by a bird-catcher forcibly or when the bird itself allows its self to be caught voluntarily. [When it becomes uncertain whether to hope for a thing or not to desire or expect a thing, the Atma becomes mired in confusions, doubts and perplexities. It loses its independent character like the bird trapped by the bird catcher.]

As a result, being pushed and buffeted by the various hopes, desires and wishes as well as the accompanying agitations, perplexities, consternations and confusions, it becomes fallen and as wretched as a worm or insect lying in a pit in the ground<sup>1</sup> (44-46).

[Note :- 'The Atma/soul loses its pristine and divine characteristic features by allowing itself to be affected by various worldly hopes and desires, yearnings and expectations, and consequentially falls from its high exalted stature to resemble a lowly creature like a worm or insect lying on the ground in a pit. Here the ground and its pit is a metaphor for the lowest level that an Atma can fall from its most exalted and high stature which is symbolised by the vast sky above.]

आत्मनेऽस्तु नमो मह्यमविच्छन्नचिदात्मने ।  
परामृष्टोऽस्मि बुद्धोऽस्मि प्रोदितोऽस्म्यचिरादहम् ॥४७॥

ātmane'stu namo mahyamavicchinnacidātmane /  
parāmrṣṭo'smi labdho'smi prodito'smyacirādaham // 47 //

Honour and respect are paid to my true form of the eternal Atma. I, the Atma, am eternal, infinite, universal, most evident and proved, enlightened and wise, as well as risen, awakened and exalted (47).

उद्धृतोऽस्मि विकल्पेभ्यो योऽस्मि सोऽस्मि नमोऽस्तु ते ।  
तुभ्यं मह्यमनन्ताय मह्यं तुभ्यं चिदात्मने ॥४८॥

uddhṛto'smi vikalpebhyo yo'smi so'smi namo'stu te /  
tubhyaṃ mahyamanantāya mahyaṃ tubhyaṃ cidātmane // 48 //

I am an image and a manifestation of that supreme entity, and am beyond alternatives, doubts and confusions. I am 'that', and the latter is none other but me (in my subtle, sublime, cosmic and universal form). [That is, I and the supreme Brahm are the one and the same; there is no duality between us; we are one and uniform.]

I pay my obeisance and respect to my pure and true self. You and I are infinite and endless; you and I are both eternal and infinite, enlightened and conscious 'souls' called 'Chidatma'. [Here 'you' refers to 'Brahm'.] Honour and respect to both of us (48).

नमस्तुभ्यं परेशाय नमो मह्यं शिवाय च । तिष्ठन्नपि हि नासीनो गच्छन्नपि न गच्छति ।  
शान्तोऽपि व्यवहारस्थः कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥४९॥

namastubhyaṃ pareśāya namo mahyaṃ śivāya ca / tiṣṭhannapi hi nāsīno  
gacchannapi na gacchati / śānto'pi vyavahārasthaḥ kurvannapi na lipyate //  
49 //

Respects and obeisance are paid to my pure self which is an image of the supreme Lord and Shiva (symbolising wisdom, enlightenment,

auspiciousness, truth, beauty, renunciation, simplicity and humility as well as the stupendous powers that can create and annihilate in an instant). This Atma is very unique and paradoxical —it does not remain seated although it sits (in the heart of the creature); it does not wonder about although it never remains at one place; it engrosses or involves itself in various interactions with the world outside although it is at rest and indifferent to it; it does all the works pertaining to this mundane world of activities but it itself remains completely aloof, detached and dispassionate towards it (49).

सुलभश्चायमत्यन्तं सुज्ञेयश्चाप्तबन्धुवत् । शरीरपद्मकुहरे सर्वेषामेव षट्पदः ॥५०॥

sulabhaścāyamatyantam sujñeyaścāptabandhuvāt /  
śārīrapadmakuhare sarveṣāmeva ṣaṭpadaḥ // 50 //

This (Atma) is easily accessible to all who are sincere about seeking it. It is like one's own dear brother. It is like a bumble-bee in the lotus-like heart of the creature (50).

न मे भोगस्थितौ वाञ्छा न मे भोगविसर्जने ।  
यदायाति तदायातु यत्प्रयाति प्रयातु तत् ॥५१॥

na me bhogasthitau vāñchā na me bhogavisarjane /  
yadāyāti tadāyātu yatprayāti prayātu tat // 51 //

I (the Atma) do not have the desire to enjoy the comforts of the sensual objects of the world or gratification of the sense organs, nor the desires not to do so. [That is, I'm neutral and without any desire.] Whatever comes, let it come; whatever goes, let it go (51).

मनसा मनसि च्छिन्ने निरहंकारतां गते । भावेन गलिते भावे स्वस्थस्तिष्ठामि केवलः ॥५२॥

manasā manasi cchinne nirahaṁkāratām gate /  
bhāvena galite bhāve svasthastiṣṭhāmi kevalaḥ // 52 //

When the intellect is separated from the mind, when the 'Ahankar' (ego, pride, haughtiness, arrogance, hypocrisy) is dissipated, and when all emotions and sentiments are destroyed —I am established in my pure and healthy form which is the only one known as the 'Atma' (which in turn is pure consciousness) (52).

[Note :- (i) 'Healthy' form because all these elements are like a disease for the soul/Atma; it is better they are eliminated at the earliest opportunity. (ii) The word 'Keval' means 'the only one; the only one of



its kind; an unique and unparalleled entity' —these are some of the characteristic features which define the Atma.]

निर्भावं निरहंकारं निर्मनस्कमनीहितम् । केवलास्पन्दशुद्धात्मन्येव तिष्ठति मे रिपुः ॥५३॥

nirbhāvaṃ nirahaṃkāraṃ nirmanaskamanīhitam /  
kevalāspandaśuddhāt-manyeva tiṣṭhati me ripuḥ // 53 //

I (the Sanyasi) am without any emotions and sentiments, am without any 'Ahankar', am with a neutral mind (i.e., am unbiased), and am without any efforts (see verse no. 51 above). On the contrary, my true self is the only one of its kind entity called the pristine pure and uncorrupt Atma, which is vibrant and pulsating with life and vitality. In this scenario, how can I have any enemy or opponent anywhere? (53).

तृष्णारज्जुगणं छित्त्वा मच्छरीरकपञ्जरात् । न जाने क्व गतोऽद्वीय निरहंकारपक्षिणी ॥५४॥

trṣṇārajjuganaṃ chittvā maccharīrakapañjarāt /  
na jāne kva gatodḍīya nirahaṃkārapakṣiṇī // 54 //

The bird representing 'Nirahankar' (literally meaning lack of pride), which resides in the cage represented by my body, has somehow cut off its fetters or strings symbolising 'Trishna' (the ties of desires, greed, avarice, yearnings, ambitions, thirst for the world and its comforts and its sensual objects of gratification), and has flown away somewhere<sup>1</sup> (54).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>That is, *Trishna* could not keep 'Nirahankar' subdued for a long time. The latter was able to free itself from the former and flee from the person who used this thread or chain of 'Trishna' to prevent the bird symbolised by the lack of 'Ahankar' from escaping. Put simply it means that as long as a person has worldly desires, he cannot lack pride and ego. It is impossible for him to have any control over his pride, ego, haughtiness, arrogance and hypocrisy if he has worldly greed, avarice, yearnings, desires, ambition, volitions and thirst for gratification of the sensual organs of his body.

*Ahankar and Trishna* go hand in hand. *Trishna* for worldly gains inspires a man to make greater efforts to fulfill his desire and achieve success in acquiring the objects of his desire. Once successful, it fills him with pride of success and the pride of having acquired something which he had got out of his own strength and intelligence. Besides this, only a person who is able can even think of acquiring any object of comfort in the world which is rare for his compatriots to have. For instance, only a rich man can hope to acquire, say, a costly gadget which is beyond the reach of an ordinary man. So the very fact that he wants that gadget shows that he has a hidden pride in him that he has the capability, the financial prowess and the wherewithal to acquire it. There

is a subtle, concealed 'Ahankar' hidden in him that he can do such and such thing, he can acquire and enjoy such and such thing, and he is capable of doing it. It is 'Ahankar' that propels him to show the world that he is superior in knowledge, wisdom, scholarship, powers, strength, wealth and prosperity. This 'Trishna' for one-up-man-ship is directly proportionate to his 'Ahankar'.]

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।  
यः समः सर्वभूतेषु जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५५॥

yasya nāhaṁkṛto bhāvo buddhiryasya na lipyate /  
yaḥ samaḥ sarvabhūteṣu jīvitam tasya śobhate // 55 //

A person (Sanyasi) who does not feel or think that he is the 'doer of deeds', whose mind and intellect is free from any sense of attachment, infatuation, endearment and passions, who treats all mortal beings (of the world) equally —verily, the existence and life of such a person (Sanyasi) is auspicious, honourable, revered, praiseworthy and is worth living (55).

योऽन्तःशीतलया बुद्ध्या रागद्वेषविमुक्तया ।  
साक्षिवत्पश्यतीदं हि जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५६॥

yo'ntaḥśītalayā buddhyā rāgadveṣavimuktayā /  
sākṣivatpāśyatīdam hi jīvitam tasya śobhate // 56 //

A person (Sanyasi) whose inner self is very cool, quiet, comforting, peaceful, serene, unruffled and tranquil, whose mind has freed itself from, 'Raag' and 'Dwesh' (attachments, attractions, affections, infatuations as well as hatred, animosity, jealousy, ill-will, malice ), and who observes this world as a mere witness (i.e., does not get emotionally and mentally involved or engrossed in it) —verily, the life and existence of such an exalted person is indeed auspicious, honourable and worthy (56).

येन सम्यक्परिज्ञाय हेयोपादेयमुज्झता । चित्तस्यान्तेऽर्पितं चित्तं जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५७॥

yena samyakparijñāya heyopādeyamujjhatā /  
cittasyānte'rpitam cittam jīvitam tasya śobhate // 57 //

A person (Sanyasi) who has become fully enlightened and wise, who pays no attention to what is good or what is bad, and who has merged his intellect and mind with the supreme knowledge and enlightenment embodied by his Atma —verily, the life and existence of such a person is really and truly auspicious, worthy of honour and praises (57).

ग्राह्यग्राहकसंबन्धे क्षीणे शान्तिरुदेत्यलम् । स्थितिमभ्यागता शान्तिर्मोक्षनामाभिधीयते ॥५८॥

grāhyagrāhakasaṃbandhe kṣīṇe śāntirudetyalam /  
sthitimabhyāgatā śāntirmokṣanāmābhidhīyate // 58 //

Stable and permanent peace and tranquility is achieved when the relationship between two entities —of one being a customer (or acceptor) of a particular thing and the other being the thing itself (which is accepted)—is disrupted or broken permanently. This is why peace, tranquility, serenity and calmness are treated as equivalent to emancipation and salvation, liberation and deliverance (58).

[Note :- When a persons wants to buy something, he gets emotionally attached to it, always thinks of it and gets worked up until he acquires it. He will go to all ends and adopt all means to get it, to acquire it. Obviously, this creates endless restlessness and agitation in his mind. Once he gets it, he becomes the acceptor. Then he tries his best to protect his acquisition, leading to further agitations. When this link is broken at the very start —i.e., when the person does not want to acquire anything in the first place, the consequential chain of agitations have no validity. This gives peace and tranquility to him and his mind. He has ‘liberated’ himself from the bondage of desire, and liberation is tantamount to ‘deliverance’ from the shackles that seem to tie him down to that desire for that thing. Deliverance produces perfect freedom or ‘emancipation’, and this gives immense peace and bliss to him, which are synonymous with ‘salvation’ from the pit of restlessness and agitations, of anxiety and expectations arising out of his hopes of fulfilling his endless chain of desires.]

भ्रष्टबीजोपमा भूयो जन्माङ्कुरविवर्जिता । हृदि जीवद्विमुक्तानां शुद्धा भवति वासना ॥५९॥

bhraṣṭabījopamā bhūyo janmāṅkuravivarjitā /  
hṛdi jīvadvimuktānāṃ śuddhā bhavati vāsanā // 59 //

Even as a roasted seed is unable to produce a sprout, the heart of a person who has freed himself from the shackles of the world, is unable to have any ‘Vasanas’ (passion, desires, yearnings, lust) towards the world. His heart becomes pure and cleansed of all faults, flaws, shortcomings and blemishes related with these ‘Vasanas’ (59).

पावनी परमोदारा शुद्धसत्त्वानुपातिनी । आत्मध्यानमयी नित्या सुषुप्तिस्थेव तिष्ठति ॥६०॥

pāvanī paramodārā śuddhasattvānupātīnī /

ātmadhyānamayī nityā suṣuptistheva tiṣṭhati // 60 //

Such a person (Sanyasi) is able to purify and raise to a higher stature even those who are fallen, lowly and wretched because of their compassionate, most magnanimous and generous nature. He is the one who faithfully accepts the absolute Truth and Reality, is engrossed in contemplating on the pure self called the Atma, and is established firmly in his eternal form in which there is no awareness of both the external, gross, physically visible world as well as the imaginary world created by the mind. This state of existence is called ‘Sushupta’ (or the deep sleep state of consciousness) (60).

चेतनं चित्तरिक्तं हि प्रत्यक्चेतनमुच्यते । निर्मनस्कस्वभावत्वान्न तत्र कलनामलम् ॥६१॥

cetanaṃ cittariktaṃ hi pratyakcetanamucyate /  
nirmanaskasvabhāvatvānna tatra kalanāmalam // 61 //

When the essence called ‘Chetan’ or consciousness is delinked or freed from its interaction with the ‘Chitta’ or the intellect and the mind, it is only then that it becomes pure and pristine conscious factor called the Atma. When it becomes devoid of all desires and habits, inherent tendencies and inclinations (called the ‘Vrittis and Vasanas’ of the creature), it becomes fully cleansed and pure, and no faults, flaws or taints can arise in it any further (61).

सा सत्यता सा शिवता सावस्था पारमात्मिकी ।  
सर्वज्ञता सा संतृप्तिर्नतु यत्र मनः क्षतम् ॥६२॥

sā satyatā sā śivatā sāvasthā pāramātmikī /  
sarvajñatā sā saṃtṛptirnatu yatra manaḥ kṣatam // 62 //

It (the pure and conscious Atma) is the absolute Truth and Reality; it is an embodiment of Shiva (symbolising auspiciousness, wisdom, enlightenment, truth, renunciation, beauty, meditation, contemplation, humility, bliss and other such divine and stupendous powers that Shiva possesses); it is there where the supreme Soul of the cosmos is established; it is omniscient, all-knowing and all-wise; it is fully contented, satisfied and fulfilled. It is not the habitat where the mind is disrupted, distracted and torn apart in confusions and doubts, perplexities and vexations, consternations and confoundedness (62).

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि । निरस्तमननानन्दः संविन्मात्रपरोऽस्म्यहम् ॥६३॥

pralapanvisrjangrḥṇannunmiṣannimiṣannapi /  
nirastamananānandaḥ saṁvinmātraparo'smyaham // 63 //

A Sanyasi should think thus— ‘Though I behave like an ordinary mortal by lamenting or wailing (such as when in anguish or sorrows), by creating and producing, by accepting and rejecting, by momentarily opening and closing the eyes, but still essentially I am contemplative and thoughtful by nature (or I have eliminated or got rid of the restless nature of my mind, or I have conquered and subdued my mind or have rejected its dominance over me). I am an image or embodiment of bliss, happiness and joy, and am the enlightened, wise, erudite and knowledgeable supreme, transcendental entity called the Atma itself (63).

मलं संवेद्यमुत्सृज्य मनो निर्मूलयन्परम् । आशापाशानलं छित्वा संविन्मात्रपरोऽस्म्यहम् ॥६४॥

malaṁ saṁvedyamutsrjya mano nirmūlayanparam /  
āśāpāśānalaṁ chittvā saṁvinmātraparo'smyaham // 64 //

I have separated/delinked my self from the mind which experiences, enjoys and collects stimuli (impulses) from the external world in the form of knowledge (perceptions and informations). I have made (trained) the mind to abandon all its desires and wishes, hopes and expectations. I have broken all shackles representing these. I am an image of enlightenment, wisdom, erudition and truthful knowledge (64).

[Note :- Here the pronoun ‘I’ identifies the Sanyasi with the Atma and not with either his gross body or his subtle body consisting of his sense organs and his mind-intellect complex respectively. When he says ‘I’, he means his pure self, which is the Atma or the pure conscious, enlightened and self illuminated soul.]

अशुभाशुभसंकल्पः संशान्तोऽस्मि निरामयः । नष्टेष्टानिष्टकलनः संविन्मात्रपरोऽस्म्यहम् ॥६५॥

aśubhāśubhasaṁkalpaḥ saṁśānto'smi nirāmayah /  
naṣṭeṣṭāniṣṭakalanah saṁvinmātraparo'smyaham // 65 //

I live calmly and peacefully in a healthy state of existence (literally, a disease free existence) which is free from the ailments represented by the various good or bad ‘Sankalps’ (i.e., ambitions, determinations and volitions). [In the absence of any ambitions and volitions, there is no cause of any restlessness or anxiety to fulfill or anyhow accomplish them. This is like a disease for a creature because it snatches away the creature's peace and tranquility of mind just like any pain or suffering from an affliction of the body makes a person restless, agitated and anxious.]

Having forsaken the fear of being successful or unsuccessful in any endeavour, being perturbed by the prospect of failure and shame, and

being excited at the prospects of success and accomplishments, I live in a state of being ‘enlightened and self realised’ (fully knowing who I am, what is the truth, the futility of pursuing various desires, ambitions, hopes and expectations, and remaining ever contented and satisfied, dispassionate and detached, and free from all encumbrances, delusions and hallucinations arising out of ignorance) (65).

आत्मतापरते त्यक्त्वा निर्विभागो जगत्स्थितौ । वज्रस्तम्भवदात्मानमवलम्ब्य  
स्थितोऽस्म्यहम् । निर्मलायां निराशायां स्वसंवित्तौ स्थितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥६६॥

ātmatāparate tyaktvā nirvibhāgo jagatsthithau / vajrastambhavadātmānamavalambya sthitho’smyaham / nirmalāyāṃ nirāśāyāṃ svasaṃvittau sthitho’smyaham // 66 //

Having completely forsaken and discarded all emotions of infatuations, love, endearment, fondness, longings, attachments and attractions, as well as of malice, ill-will, animosity and hatred towards this world, or having abandoned differentiating between ‘my and your’ and ‘me and you’.

I live in this mortal world firmly established in my Atma, which I treat as my habitat (instead of the external, perishable and artificial world full of faults).

This Atma (which is my habitat and my identity as well, as I am a personified form of pure and supreme Consciousness) is uniform, unbreakable and immutable, as well as strong, sturdy, steady, unwavering and firm like the ‘Vajra’ (which is the strongest material in existence).

[The word ‘Stambh/stambha’ in the text also means a ‘pillar’, while the word ‘Vajra’ means something that is extremely strong and sturdy, usually a reference to diamond as it is the strongest material in existence in Nature. The pillar is a metaphor for strength, support, sturdiness and stability as it is able to support even huge buildings. Hence, the combined phrase ‘vajrastambhavadātmā’ will obviously mean that the Atma is as strong and sturdy and steadfast as the Vajra; the Atma supports everything else just like the pillar or Stambha supports a huge building.]

I am firmly rooted in my true form which is pure enlightenment, most wise and an erudite entity (66).

ईहितानीहितैर्मुक्तो हेयोपादेयवर्जितः । कदान्तस्तोषमेष्यामि स्वप्रकाशपदे स्थितः ॥६७॥

īhitānīhitairmukto heyopādeyavarjitaḥ /  
kadāntastoṣameṣyāmi svaprakāśapade sthitaḥ // 67 //

I have liberated myself from the desire or inclination to make efforts (to achieve success in any endeavour or acquire things that please me) as well as the tendency to be lazy, indolent and lethargic.

[That is, I remain neutral and indifferent to everything, to the various activities of the world, to the allurements of the objects of the

world as well as gratification of my sense organs. But my indifference should not be construed as laziness or lethargy, because I remain ever engrossed in contemplation and meditation upon my Atma and Brahm. I am always alert and active in my spiritual pursuits, but I remain aloof from worldly pursuits. See also verse no. 53 and 55.]

I have freed myself from either treating anything as contemptible and lowly, or as worthy of acquiring and receiving (because for me, all things are equal —see verse no. 56 and 58 also).

When will I get the contentedness, satisfaction and its consequential peace and tranquility so much characteristic of the Atma? When shall I be established in the abode which is self-illuminated and radiantly splendidous? (67).

कदोपशान्तमननो धरणीधरकन्दरे । समेष्यामि शिलासाम्यं निर्विकल्पसमाधिना ॥६८॥

kadopaśāntamanano dharaṇīdharakandare /  
sameṣyāmi śilāsāmyaṁ nirvikalpasamādhinā // 68 //

When will I retire to a cave in a mountain range to calmly contemplate, ponder and meditate? When will I enter the stage of ‘Nirvikalp Samadhi’ and become steady and effortless like a rock? (68).

[Note :- The ‘Nirvikalp Samadhi’ is the trance-like state of transcendental existence attained by ascetics when they lose their individuality and merge with the supreme Soul while still retaining the physical body. This is generally done in a seclude place like a cave, and can last indefinitely. The word ‘Nirvikalp’ literally means a state of existence which has no parallel or alternative. In other words, it is absolutely unique, and transcends the ordinary and the mundane; it has no parallel or alternative.]

निरंशध्यानविश्रान्तिमूकस्य मम मस्तके । कदा तार्ण करिष्यन्ति कुलायं वनपत्रिणः ॥६९॥

niraṁśadhyānaviśrāntimūkasya mama mastake /  
kadā tāṛṇaṁ kariṣyanti kulāyaṁ vanaputriṇāḥ // 69 //

When will I become so firmly and deeply engrossed in meditating and contemplating upon that Brahm who is without any fraction (i.e., who cannot be partitioned), is immutable and imperishable so much so that I become so steady and unmoving that the cuckoo bird can build its nest on my head (69).

संकल्पपादपं तृष्णालतं छित्वा मनोवनम् । विततां भुवमासाद्य विहरामि यथासुखम् ॥७०॥

saṁkalpapādapaṁ tṛṣṇālatam chittvā manovanam /

vitatām bhuvamāsādyā viharāmi yathāsukham // 70 //

I have cut down my various ‘Sankalps’ (determinations, vows, ambitions, volitions) which are like tall trees of a dense forest. I have chopped through the various ‘Trishnas’ (desires, wants, greeds, avarice and yearnings for worldly objects and comforts) which are like the creepers twined around those trees. I have succeeded in crossing (overcoming, subduing, conquering) this mind of mine with its myriad wishes, inclinations, tendencies and the host of problems, anxieties and agitations accompanying them, which are all like a dense forest for me.

Having crossed this great and intractable forest (i.e., having conquered and subdued my mind with its varied and myriad ‘Sankalps’ and ‘Trishnas’), I have finally emerged in the open plain beyond (that forest) which is clear from these horrible hurdles. Here, I wander around peacefully and in bliss (without facing any moral obstacles and torments) (70).

[Note :- The allegory of the forest will be best understood by those who have ever had the misfortune of getting lost in one. No sun-light (which is symbolic of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) enters or penetrates in a deep and dense forest covered with thick canopy of foliage. The traveler knows not in which direction to proceed because there is no sun to guide him. The dense cover of thick foliage, tall trees and a network of creepers act like a formidable wall for the traveler. [Here, the spiritual aspirant or seeker]. This symbolic forest prevents the traveler (the spiritual seeker or aspirant) from obtaining peace; he is so horrified and trapped in its midst that his mind is too busy, anxious and restless with terror to find a quick way out of the forest than to ever have time for the luxury of peace and tranquility. Once the forest is somehow crossed, the sight of the welcoming open sun-lit plains beyond fills the traveler with ecstasy and jubilation, the extent of which just cannot be imagined; for all practical purpose, he deems himself to have attained a new life full of bliss and happiness.]

पदं तदनुयातोऽस्मि केवलोऽस्मि जयाम्यहम् ।  
निर्वाणोऽस्मि निरीहोऽस्मि निरंशोऽस्मि निरीप्सितः ॥७१॥

padam tadanuyāto’smi kevalo’smi jayāmyaham /  
nirvāṇo’smi nirīho’smi niraṃśo’smi nirīpsitaḥ // 71 //

I am an embodiment of that imperishable and supreme state called ‘Param-Pad’<sup>1</sup>. I am unique, unparalleled and one of my kind. I am victory, triumph and success personified. I personify ‘Nirvan’ (emancipation and ultimate salvation). I am without any ego and pride, am without a fraction or part, and am without (i.e., do not have) any desires, hopes, attachments or attractions of any kind in this delusory world (71).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The *Param Pad* is a stature in which a creature reaches the supreme Lord and merges his own individual Atma with the Atma of the



supreme Being. The word 'Param' means the most exalted, supreme, greatest and the ultimate, while 'Pad' means feet, state, stature, honour, title etc. That is, the creature is honoured with the highest title obtainable in this creation in the form of salvation and emancipation of his soul. It also refers to achieving the goal of being near to his Lord.]

स्वच्छतोर्जितता सत्ता हृद्यता सत्यता ज्ञता । आनन्दितोपशमता सदा प्रमुदितोदिता ।  
पूर्णतोदारता सत्या कान्तिसत्ता सदैकता ॥७२॥

svacchatorjitatā sattā hr̥dyatā satyatā jñatā / ānanditopaśamatā sadā  
pramuditoditā / pūrṇatodārātā satyā kāntisattā sadaikatā // 72 //

I am pristine pure, uncorrupt and clean, am potent, able and agile, am authoritative and dignified, and am an embodiment of Truth as well as of enlightenment and wisdom. I am blissful and happy and have established firm restraint over my sense organs as well as over all the various 'Vasanas' (desires, passions, lust). I am always happy and cheerful, fully contented, satiated and fulfilled. I am compassionate, kind, generous, gracious and magnanimous, am truthful, non-dual, unchangable and uniform, and am the radiant and glorious Supreme Authority' (72).

इत्येवं चिन्तयन्भिक्षुः स्वरूपपस्थितिमञ्जसा ।  
निर्विकल्पस्वरूपज्ञो निर्विकल्पो बभूव ह ॥७३॥

ityevam cintayanbhiṣuḥ svarūpasthitimañjasā /  
nirvikalpasvarūpajño nirvikalpo babhūva ha // 73 //

A Sanyasi should think in the above manner (verse nos. 63-72) and be established in his true self (i.e., he should realise his true identity and be convinced of it, and as a result, obtain peace and tranquility, happiness and joy, felicity and beatitude, emancipation and salvation, liberation and deliverance et al). He should acquire full awareness and knowledge of the state of existence called 'Nirvikalpa' (see verse no. 68) and become one like it (73).

आतुरो जीवति चेत्क्रमसंन्यासः कर्तव्यः । न शूद्रस्त्रीपतितोदक्या संभाषणम् ।  
न यतेर्देवपूजनोत्सवदर्शनम् । तस्मान्न संन्यासिन एष लोकः ।  
आतुरकुटीचकयोर्भूलोकभुवर्लोकौ । बहूदकस्य स्वर्गलोकः । हंसस्य तपोलोकः ।  
परमहंसस्य सत्यलोकः । तुरीयातीतावधूतयोः स्वात्मन्येव कैवल्यं स्वरूपानुसंधानेन  
भ्रमरकीटन्यायवत् ॥७४॥

āturo jīvati cetkramasaṁnyāsaḥ kartavyaḥ / na śūdrastrīpatitodakyā  
saṁbhāṣaṇam / na yaterdevapūjanotsavadarśanam / tasmānna saṁnyāsina

eṣa lokaḥ / āturakuṭīcakayorbhūlokabhuvālokau / bahūdakasya svargalokaḥ /  
 haṃsasya tapolokaḥ / paramahaṃsasya satyalokaḥ / turīyātītāvadhūtayoḥ  
 svātmānyeva kaivalyaṃ svarūpānusaṃdhānena bhramarakīṭanyāyavat // 74  
 //

If a person is eager to take to the life of a Sanyasi, he should wait for the proper time and adopt the vows of a Sanyasi in due course. This is called 'Karma Sanyas' (see verse no. 18 and 22). Such a Sanyasi should not talk with a 'Shudra' (low caste man or a lowly and mean man), a woman, specially a menstruating woman, and those persons who have fallen from their chosen path or stature.

A Sanyasi should never, under any circumstance, go to witness any religious function held in honour of any God —such worldly activities are not meant for a Sanyasi (see also verse no. 75 of this canto of this Upanishad).

For Sanyasis classified as 'Aatur' (literally meanings those who are eager to take to Sanyas; see verse no. 7), their abode is in the 'Bhu-Loka' (the terrestrial world). For those who are called 'Kutichak', their abode is in the 'Bhuvaha-Loka' (the sky). For 'Bahudak Sanyasis', their 'Loka' (abode or destination) is in the 'Swarg' (the heavens). For 'Hans Sanyasis', their 'Loka' is called 'Tapaha' (the abode obtained through doing severe Tapa or penances and austerities). And for the 'Paramhans Sanyasis', their abode is in the 'Satya Loka' (the abode which is the ultimate destination for a creature's soul, where there is only 'Truth').

The last two categories of Sanyasis are called 'Turiyateet/Turiyatit' and 'Avadhut' respectively. They live a life like a bumble-bee (or a honey bee) trying to find out about and research on the nature of their true self and the essential truth and reality of existence (which is like searching for nectar by the bee). They eventually realise it and become established in that Truth (just like the bee alights on the flower once it traces the flower having nectar) which is immaculate, immutable, unique, one of its kind, unparalleled, uniform, indivisible and universal Reality. They become one with that supreme Truth and Reality which is the essence of the Atma and which is their true identity (74).

[Note :- The various types of Sanyasis and their characteristic features which define them are elaborated in verse nos. 18-30.]

स्वरूपानुसंधानव्यतिरिक्तान्यशास्त्राभ्यास उष्ट्रकुङ्कुमभारवद्व्यर्थः । न योगशास्त्र प्रवृत्तिः ।  
 न सांख्यशास्त्राभ्यासः । न मन्त्रतन्त्रव्यापारः । नेतरशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिर्यतेरस्ति ।  
 अस्ति चेच्छवालंकारवत्कर्माचारविद्यादूरः । न परिव्राण्णामसंकीर्तनपरो यद्यत्कर्म  
 करोति तत्तत्फलमनुभवति । एरण्डतैलफेनवत्सर्वं परित्यजेत् । न देवताप्रसादग्रहणम् ।  
 न बाह्यदेवाभ्यर्चनं कुर्यात् ॥७५॥

svārūpānusaṃdhānavyatiṛiktānyaśāstrābhyāsa uṣṭrakuṃkumabhāravad-  
 vyarthaḥ / na yogaśāstrapravṛttiḥ / na sām̐khyāśāstrābhyāsaḥ / na  
 mantratantravyāpāraḥ / netaraśāstrapravṛttiryaṭerasti / asti cecchavālaṃkāra-  
 vatkarmācāravidyādūraḥ / na parivrāṇṇāmasaṃkīrtanaparo yadyatkarma

karoti tattatphalamanubhavati / eraṇḍatailaphenavatsarvaṃ parityajet / na  
devatāprasādagrahaṇaṃ / na bāhyadevābhyarcanaṃ kuryāt // 75 //

Except contemplating and meditating upon his pure and true self as well as searching out its real essence, it is futile for a Sanyasi to study and practice different scriptures even as it is useless to load a camel with saffron.

For a Sanyasi, following the precepts and practices of Yoga (meditation exercises), or the business (practice, tradition) of using ‘Mantras’ and ‘Tantras’ (i.e., use of divine words and symbols for incantations and occult practice) for worship, or practicing the teachings ‘Sankhya Shastra’ (which is one of the six schools of Indian philosophies), or following any other tradition or scripture whatsoever (except the Upanishadic tenets), is best avoided. That is, a Sanyasi should not waste his time in pursuing so many varieties of paths, each promising emancipation and salvation for its adherents.

Too many paths and too many advisers will only cause confusion in his mind. So he is best advised to shun all, and instead follow one single path —and that path is contemplation upon the pure, conscious and enlightened Atma residing in his own bosom; doing meditation on this Atma will fill him with complete bliss. He should exclude all other paths for his spiritual pursuits because they act as a drag in his spiritual upliftment. These ritualistic forms of worship (such as ‘Tantra’, use of ‘Mantra’ and various ‘Yoga’ practices) are only meant for those who are not as elevated and exalted in the spiritual hierarchy as a truly realised and enlightened Sanyasi is. In fact, these practices only seem to bog him down in endless, time consuming rituals which are not worthwhile and meaningful. Similarly, endless debates and discussions on scriptures are only the cause for vexations for the spirit, and they disturb the tranquility of his inner self.

If however, inspite of the prohibition, any Sanyasi does it, then he is akin to an ornament lying on a dead body (i.e., worthless, abhorable and as forsakeable as the dead body itself). It is in violation of the principles, ethos and practices of true and pure Sanyas.

A Sanyasi should not participate in the group chanting or chorus singing of the name of any God in a practice called ‘Kirtan’ (नामसंकीर्तन) because, if he does so, he will be violating the principle tenets and code of conduct prescribed for Sanyasis (that they should not worship any God except their own Atma as the supreme Brahm), and therefore they will have to suffer the consequences of such violation.

Hence, a Sanyasi should forsake all these worldly activities just like the foam collected on the surface of castor oil. A Sanyasi should neither accept any food that has been offered to any outside God or Goddess because he is supposed to treat his own Atma as the supreme God called Brahm who is the supreme Lord of all, and he should worship that supreme Brahm with this firm conviction (75).

[Note :- Please also refer to verse no. 74 of this canto.]

स्वव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वं त्यक्त्वा मधुकरवृत्त्याहारमाहरन्कृशीभूत्वा मेदोवृद्धिमकुर्वन्विहरेत् ।  
माधुकरेण करपात्रेणास्यपात्रेण वा कालं नयेत् । आत्मसंमितमाहारमाहरेदात्मवान्यतिः ॥७६॥

svavyatiriktaṃ sarvaṃ tyaktvā madhukaravṛttyāhāramāharankṛśībhūtvā  
medovṛddhimakurvanviharet / mādhūkareṇa karapātreṇāsyapātreṇa vā kālaṃ  
nayet / ātmasaṃmitamāhāramāharedātmavānyatiḥ // 76 //

A Sanyasi should abandon all company and beg for food which he should accept directly in his cupped hands and eat from there. [That is, he should not either hoard food or eat more than essential, but just sufficient enough in order to sustain life.]

This must be his routine life style to ensure that he does not become obese and lethargic. He should always be on the move, accepting food either in his cupped hands or directly in his mouth (like a cow) in order to sustain himself. He should exercise self-restraint and contemplate upon his Atma (76).

आहारस्य च भागौ द्वौ तृतीयमुदकस्य च । वायौः संचरणार्थाय चतुर्थमवशेषयेत् ॥७७॥

āhārasya ca bhāgau dvau tṛtīyamudakasya ca / vāyoḥ saṃcaraṇārthāya  
caturthamavaśeṣayet // 77 //

A Sanyasi should eat only sufficient enough to fill half of his stomach. The third quarter should be filled with water and the remaining fourth quarter should be left empty, i.e., it should be filled with air. [That is, he should never over eat] (77).

भैक्षेण वर्तयेन्नित्यं नैकान्नाशी भवेत्क्वचित् । निरीक्षन्ते त्वनुद्विग्नास्तद्गृहं यत्नो व्रजेत् ॥७८॥

bhaikṣeṇa vartayennityaṃ naikānnāśī bhavetkvacit /  
nirīkṣante tvanudvignā-stadgṛhaṃ yatnato vrajet // 78 //

A Sanyasi should always rely on alms and begging to survive. He should not accept food always from the same household, i.e., he should seek from a different house each time he goes for begging (see also verse no. 79).

He should go to accept food only from those persons who wait patiently for the Sanyasi to arrive and accept it from them (i.e., from the household from where the Sanyasi expects to get respect, where he is welcome, and the food is especially earmarked for him).

He should not go somewhere where he is not welcome, appears to be a burden, treated contemptuously or even scolded and insulted and told to get away).

He should accept food with dignity and honour, and not after being subjected to any kind of insult or humiliation (78).

पञ्चसप्तगृहाणां तु भिक्षामिच्छेत्क्रियावताम् । गोदोहमात्रमाकाङ्क्षेन्निष्क्रान्तो न पुनर्ब्रजेत् ॥७९॥

pañcasaptagr̥hāṇāṃ tu bhikṣāmicchetskriyāvatām /  
godohamātramākāṅkṣen-niṣkrānto na punarvrajat // 79 //

A Sanyasi should go to beg for food in five or seven households at the most which follow the righteous path or live noble lives. There, he should wait for food for a period which is not more than the time taken to milk a cow.

He should not go to the same place again (see verse nos. 27, 28 and 78 in this context) (79).

नक्ताद्वरश्चोपवास उपवासादयाचितः । अयाचिताद्वरं भैक्षं तस्मात्भैक्षेण वर्तयेत् ॥८०॥

naktādvaraścopavāsa upavāsādayācitaḥ /  
ayācitādvaram bhaikṣyaṃ tasmātbhaikṣeṇa vardhayet // 80 //

It is better to fast than to eat during the night. Compared to fasting, it is better to accept food that has not been asked for (i.e., the food which comes as alms or charity or offering to the Sanyasi at his place of stay by someone who comes to him and offers the food to him without his actually seeking it). Better than eating food which has come in this way without his asking for or expecting it, a Sanyasi should eat food for which he has begged. [That is, it is better to beg for food than to eat something without begging or which has been offered to him without his formally asking for it.]

Hence, as far as possible, he should rely on begging to get food to eat (80).

नैव सव्यापसव्येन भिक्षाकाले विशेद्गृहान् । नातिक्रामेद्गृहं मोहाद्यत्र दोषी न विद्यते ॥८१॥

naiva savyāpasavyena bhikṣākāle viśedgr̥hān /  
nātikrāmedgr̥haṃ mohādyatra doṣo na vidyate // 81 //

While on the mission to beg for food, the Sanyasi should not approach the household from either the right or the left —i.e., the Sanyasi should approach the household directly from the front. [That is, he should approach with dignity, self respect and honour from front, and not stealthily sneak in from the side to catch the residents of the house unawares. By approaching from the front, he ensures that by the time he reaches the door, his arrival would have been known to the people. And, on the contrary, if he comes from the side, it indicates that he does not wish to foretell his arrival and wishes to come in secretly like a thief or someone who is ashamed at begging, a thought that should never occur to

a Sanyasi. This is the approach not taken by those who are bold and exalted in their stature.]

He should not leave a house (or turn away from it) from which there is no fault in accepting food as alms or charity either because of any personal emotions (such as grudge) or by mistaken beliefs (that such a household is of a low caste) (81).

श्रोत्रियान्नं न भिक्षेत श्रद्धाभक्तिबहिष्कृतम् । व्रात्यस्यापि गृहे भिक्षेच्छ्रद्धाभक्तिपुरस्कृते ॥८२॥

śrotriānnaṃ na bhikṣeta śraddhābhaktibahiṣkṛtaṃ /  
vrātyasyāpi gr̥he bhikṣecchraddhābhaktipuraskṛte // 82 //

If a person from whom the food is begged for is a Brahmin who is an expert in the Vedas but lacks affection, humility, respect and devotion (towards the Sanyasi as well as the supreme Lord), then a Sanyasi should not accept food from him or his household (though he is a Brahmin).

On the contrary, even if a person has not been traditionally of a high birth or stature in society, or is not of a high standing and purity, but if he has these attributes of affection, humility, reverence, respect and devotion (towards the guest Sanyasi as well as the supreme Lord), then the Sanyasi should not hesitate or think twice from accepting alms or charity from him or his household (82).

माधूकरमसंकल्पं प्राक्प्रणीतमयाचितम् । तात्कालिकं चोपपन्नं भैक्षं पञ्चविधं स्मृतम् ॥८३॥

mādhūkaramasaṃkṛptaṃ prākpraṇītamayācitam /  
tātkālikaṃ copannaṃ bhaikṣaṃ pañcavidhaṃ smṛtaṃ // 83 //

Seeking of food as alms or begging for it by a Sanyasi has been classified into five categories —viz, (i) Asankalpit (asaṃkṛptaṃ), (ii) Prakpranit (prākpraṇītaṃ), (iii) Ayaachit (ayācitam), (iv) Tatkaalik (tātkālikaṃ), and (v) Upapanna (papannaṃ). Each of these has been described below in the following verses (83).

मनः संकल्परहितांस्त्रीनृहान्यञ्च सप्त वा । मधुमक्षिकवत्कृत्वा माधूकरमिति स्मृतम् ॥८४॥

manaḥ saṃkalparahitāṃstrīṅgr̥hānpañca sapta vā /  
madhumakṣikavatkṛtvā mādihūkaramiti smṛtaṃ // 84 //

The 1<sup>st</sup> type of ‘Madhukar’ (literally, begging for food just like a honey bee goes begging from one flower to another for nectar to sustain itself) is when the Sanyasi is not certain of what and where he will get something to eat. He begs for food from three, five or at the most seven houses,

taking a little from each, like a honey bee. [A honey bee collects nectar from flowers at random and does not visit a flower twice. It does not even know from which flower it would get its quota of nectar. Similarly, the Sanyasi collects whatever is available, or whatever is forthcoming in the way of food, and remains contented and satisfied with whatever he gets as alms in the form of food.]

This is called ‘Asankalp Madhukar’ (literally, begging for food without having any kind of determination or certainty). [To wit, such a Sanyasi does not know what he would get from which household. He is contented with whatever comes his way. When he sets out on his begging round, he does not decide, and cannot decide, what to eat that day. He is expected to eat what the Lord gives him to eat. The word “A-Sankalp” means not to have any determination or volition or desires.] (84).

प्रातःकाले च पूर्वद्युर्यद्भक्तैः प्रार्थितं मुहुः । तद्भैक्षं प्राक्प्रणीतं स्यात्स्थितिं कुर्यात्तथापि वा ॥८५॥

prātaḥkāle ca pūrvedyuryadbhaktaiḥ prārthitaṁ muhuḥ /  
tadbhaikṣaṁ prākpraṇītaṁ syātsṭhitiṁ kuryāttathāpi vā // 85 //

The 2<sup>nd</sup> type of ‘Madhukar’ (begging for food) is when a Sanyasi accepts food from a person who has affectionately, devotedly and respectfully requested him the previous day or early morning of the same day to accept food from him or his household. [This Sanyasi accepts this request as a token of showing grace and blessing on the giver by accepting his food.]

This is called ‘Prakpranit’ (literally, food which has come by the inspiration of a pure heart which is infused with devotion and respect for the Sanyasi) (85).

भिक्षाटनसमुद्योगाद्येन केन निमन्त्रितम् । अयाचितं तु तद्भैक्षं भोक्तव्यं च मुमुक्षुभिः ॥८६॥

bhikṣāṭanasamudyogādyena kena nimantritaṁ /  
ayācitaṁ tu tadbhaikṣaṁ bhoktavyaṁ ca mumukṣubhiḥ // 86 //

The 3<sup>rd</sup> type of ‘Madhukar’ (begging for food) is when a Sanyasi, while roaming for food, is invited by a complete stranger whom he happens to meet on the way; this stranger invites the Sanyasi to oblige him by agreeing to take food from him or his household, though the Sanyasi has not approached him or his household for food. The Sanyasi should accept his invitation and the food offered by this stranger.

This is called ‘Ayaachit’ (literally, unsolicited food). Such food is acceptable by seekers of emancipation and salvation (“mumukṣubhiḥ”; i.e. by a Sanyasi) (86).

उपस्थानेन यत्प्रोक्तं भिक्षार्थं ब्राह्मणेन तत् । तात्कालिकमिति ख्यातं भोक्तव्यं यतिभिः सदा ॥८७॥

upasthānena yatproktaṃ bhikṣārthaṃ brāhmaṇena tat /  
tātkālikamiti khyātaṃ bhoktavyaṃ yatibhistadā // 87 //

The 4<sup>th</sup> type of ‘Madhukar’ (begging for food) is when a Sanyasi is approached by a Brahmin to accept food from him even as the former is getting ready to embark on his wandering mission in search of food, or has just stepped out to do so. Then he should invariably accept this food. [That is, in such a case, the Sanyasi should abandon his wandering mission and immediately accept that food which is offered by the Brahmin.]

This is called ‘Tatkaalik’ (literally, ‘immediate’; the food that has come on the spur of the moment, or in the eleventh hour, unexpected and right in front) (87).

सिद्धमन्नं यदा नीतं ब्राह्मणेन मठं प्रति । उपपन्नमिति प्राहुर्मनयो मोक्षकाङ्क्षिणः ॥८८॥

siddhamannaṃ yadā nītaṃ brāhmaṇena maṭhaṃ prati /  
upapannamiti prāhurmunayo mokṣakāṅkṣiṇaḥ // 88 //

The 5<sup>th</sup> type of food is one which is prepared by a Brahmin in a monastery or an abbey and brought to the Sanyasi to eat; then wise sages call this type of food as ‘Upapanna’ (literally, noble or superior form of cooked food). It should be gladly and willingly accepted by a Sanyasi who is a seeker of emancipation and salvation (88).

चरेन्माधुकरं भैक्षं यतिर्लेच्छकुलादपि । एकान्न नतु भुञ्जीत बृहस्पतिसमादपि ।  
याचितायाचिताभ्यां च भिक्षाभ्यां कल्पयेत्स्थितम् ॥८९॥

carenmādhukaraṃ bhaikṣaṃ yatirmlecchakulādapi / ekānnaṃ natu bhuñjīta  
br̥haspatīsamādapi / yācitāyācitābhyāṃ ca bhikṣābhyāṃ kalpayetsthitam // 89  
//

If it becomes necessary due to circumstances, a Sanyasi can accept food as alms or charity even from a heretic or an atheist, but he should not accept it twice from the same place even though it might be a household of a man who is as senior and as respected as Lord Vrihaspati himself. [Vrihaspati is the moral preceptor of Gods.]

It is best for a Sanyasi to accept food either by going out begging for it, or accepting food from a person who has himself approached him in a respectful manner, inviting the Sanyasi to accept food from him (89).

न वायुः स्पर्शदोषेण नाग्निर्दहनकर्मणा । नापो मूत्रपुरीषाभ्यां नान्नदोषेण मस्करी ॥९०॥



na vāyuh sparśadoṣeṇa nāgnirdahanakarmaṇā /  
nāpo mūtrapuriṣābhyāṃ nānnadoṣeṇa maskarī // 90 //

The Wind or the Air touches all and sundry; the Fire burns everything (good or bad) that falls in it; everything, including urine and fecal matter (i.e., most repugnant and contemptible things) is drooped in Water (of a river, for example) —but none of them (Wind, Fire, Water) is regarded as getting polluted or defiled by the touch of even the most deplorable of things.

Likewise, a Sanyasi is not deemed to be polluted or tainted or tarnished by any external faults or blemishes (such as accepting food from a heretic or atheist as well as from a non-Brahmin (see verse nos. 89 and 82, 92 respectively) (90).

[Note :- This verse indicates that external things don't ever defile a Sanyasi. It is the fault that might arise in his inner-self — such as his heart, mind and intellect —that can defile him or pull him down to a lowly state from his exalted stature. Pollution and defilement comes from inside and not from outside because a Sanyasi's true identity is his Atma residing cocooned in the causal body that is surrounded by the subtle body (mind-intellect complex), and not the gross body consisting of the various sense organs that comes in contact with the external world. The pollution or corruption or defilement, if any, is suffered by either the gross, physical body or the subtle body, but not the causal body which houses the Atma.]

विधूमे सन्नमुसले व्यङ्गारे भुक्तवज्जने । कालेऽपराहणे भूयिष्ठे भिक्षाचरणमाचरेत् ॥९१॥

vidhūme sannamusale vyaṅgāre bhuktavajjane /  
kāle'parāhṇe bhūyiṣṭhe bhikṣācaraṇamācaret // 91 //

An ascetic (i.e. a Sanyasi) should accept food during the afternoon hours from a place which is devoid of various sounds, sights and smells associated with the preparation of food —such as lighting of the fire, smoke, pounding of the pestle to grind condiments, spices and herbs, aroma of cooking food, all delicacies arranged on the dining table, etc. This should be a place where the fire lit for cooking food has died down and everyone has finished eating. [That is, a Sanyasi should accept the leftovers only after the meal has been eaten by the people of the household. This caveat is to ensure that no one goes hungry because of the Sanyasi. After all, a Sanyasi would naturally not want that any single person has to suffer for his sake.] (91).

अभिशस्तं च पतितं पाषण्डं देवपूजकम् । वर्जयित्वा चरेद्भैक्षं सर्ववर्णेषु चापदि ॥९२॥

abhiśastam ca patitam pāṣaṇḍam devapūjakam /  
varjayitvā caredbhaikṣam sarvavarṇeṣu cāpadi // 92 //

In cases of emergency, an ascetic (Sanyasi) can accept food as alms or charity from all castes and creeds except families who are publically condemned and excommunicated, or are lowly and fallen from their status in society, and those who are imposters, cunning, deceitful, evil and scheming (92).

घृत श्वमूत्रसदृशं मधु स्यात्सुरया समम् । तैलं सूकरमूत्रं स्यात्सूपं लशुनसंमितम् ॥९३॥  
माषापूपादि मोमांसं क्षीरं मूत्रसमं भवेत् । तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन घृतादीन्वर्जयेद्यतिः ॥९४॥

ghṛtam svamūtrasadr̥ṣam madhu syātsurayā samam /  
tailam sūkaramūtram syātsūpaṁ laśunasammitam // 93 //  
māṣāpūpādi gomāṁsam kṣīraṁ mūtrasamaṁ bhavet /  
tasmātsarvaprayatnena ghṛtādīnvarjayedyatiḥ // 94 //

For a Sanyasi, clarified butter (ghee) is equivalent to dog's urine, honey is like drinking wine, oil is akin to pig's urine, food containing garlic, horse beans and fried sweets are like beef, and milk is no less abhorable than urine—hence, a true ascetic should accept food (by begging or otherwise) which is free from these prohibited ingredients. [In other words, an ascetic should absolutely refrain from eating any of these proscribed or prohibited food items, directly or indirectly. To wit, a Sanyasi should eat simply cooked, ordinary and non-oily food that is easy to digest and nourishing. He is not expected to appease his taste buds or eat anything that would make him lethargic and bloated—as this would create immense practical problems for him, especially since he has to lead a single, lonely life with no one around to attend to him if he falls sick due to his own indulgences. ] (93-94).

घृतसूपपादिसंयुक्तमन्नं नाद्यात् कदाचन । पात्रमस्य भवेत्पाणिस्तेन नित्यं स्थितिं नयेत् ।  
पाणिपात्रश्चरन्योगी नासकृद्भैक्षमाचरेत् ॥९५॥

ghṛtasūpādisaṁyuktamannaṁ nādyātkadācana / pātramasya bhavetpānistena  
nityaṁ sthitiṁ nayet / pāṇipātraścaranyogī nāsakṛdbhaikṣamācaret // 95 //

He should never accept food containing clarified butter or spicy food or titillating, hot soups. For him, his cupped hands (joined palms) are the pot to accept food; it is in it that he should always accept food (and not in any other pot or container or vessel. Refer also verse nos. 27-28). [See verse no. 111 also. There, a Sanyasi is permitted to accept fried and spiced food in cases of extreme emergencies] (95).

आस्येन तु यदाहारं गोवन्मृगयते मुनिः । तदा समः स्यात्सर्वेषु सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥९६॥

āsyena tu yadāhāraṃ govanmrgayate muniḥ /  
tadā samaḥ syātsarveṣu so'mṛtatvāya kalpate // 96 //

He should accept food only once a day, never twice. An exalted hermit (here obviously meaning a Sanyasi, as this is the context of the entire Upanishad) who takes food in his mouth only (i.e., does not store any food; see verse no. 27-28) becomes equanimous and non-differentiating in his outlook and attains the elixir of supreme bliss (or, he enjoys the taste of the essence of the nectar which gives everlasting joy and happiness, eternal bliss and beatitude) (96).

आज्यं रुधिरमिव त्यजेदेकत्रात्रं पललमिव गन्धलेपनमशुद्धलेपनमिव क्षारमन्त्यजमिव  
वस्त्रमुच्छिष्टपात्रमिवाभ्यङ्गं स्त्रीसङ्गमिव मित्राह्लादकं मूत्रमिव स्पृहां गोमांसमिव ज्ञातचरदेशं  
चण्डालवाटिकामिव स्त्रियमहिमिव सुवर्णं कालकूटमिव सभास्थलं श्मशानस्थलमिव  
राजधानीं कुम्भीपाकमिव शवपिण्डवदेकत्रात्रं न देवतार्चनम् । प्रपञ्चवृत्तिं परित्यज्य  
जीवन्मुक्तो भवेत् ॥९७॥

ājyaṃ rudhiramiva tyajedekatrānnaṃ palalamiva gandhalepanamaśuddha-  
lepanamiva kṣāramantyajamiva vastramucchiṣṭapātramivābhyāṅgaṃ  
strīsaṅgamiva mitrāhlādakaṃ mūtramiva sprhāṃ gomāṃsamiva jñātacara-  
deśaṃ caṇḍālavāṭikāmiva striyamahimiva suvarṇaṃ kālakūṭamiva sabhā-  
sthalam śmaśānasthalamiva rājadhānīm kuṃbhīpākamiva śavapiṇḍa-  
vadekatrānnaṃ na devatārcanam / prapañcavṛttiṃ parityajya jīvanmukto  
bhavet // 97 //

Butter or fat and accumulated, collected or stored food should be abhorred by a Sanyasi as if they were blood or meat respectively. An ascetic (Sanyasi, hermit) should also forsake the following— (i) perfumes and scented ointments as if they were nasty pastes, (ii) salt as if it was an untouchable product, (iii) clothes as if they were spoiled pots, (iv) oil massage as if it was equivalent to an union with a women, (v) friendly chatter and small, loose talk as if it was urine, (vi) pride, haughtiness and ego as if they were beef, (vii) begging for food from the house of an acquaintance as if it was begging from an outcaste, (viii) a woman as if she was a serpent, (ix) gold (i.e., any costly and valuable thing) as if it was the horrible poison called 'Kaalkut', (x) gatherings, congregations, assemblies and crowds as if they were funeral parties at the cremation ground, (xi) the capital city (or any large town) as if it were the most deplorable hell called 'Kumbhipak', (xii) and food from a single household as if it was an offering of 'Pinda', which are ball shaped cooked cereals offered to dead ancestors.

A Sanyasi should (xiii) never involve himself in the worship, adoration, showing respect and offering of prayers to Gods. [This prohibition is repeatedly stressed —see also verse no. 74 and 75.] (xiv)

He should abstain from all futile worldly activities (because they are artificial and cause vexation and confusion for the spirit; such worldly activities create unnecessary and avoidable perplexities, agitations, anxieties, restlessness and consternation for the Sanyasi). By doing so (i.e., by observing the above principles), he should endeavour to be spiritually freed from the fetters that shackle and pillory an ordinary creature to this deceitful, imposter, artificial, delusory, mundane and temporal world while he is physically living in it<sup>1</sup> (97).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>That is, when a Sanyasi or hermit or an ascetic observes the tenets as prescribed in this Upanishad, he attains truthful liberation and deliverance of his soul by breaking the fetters that tie him down to this illusionary and entrapping world full of imposterings, deceit, conceit, show-offs and falsehoods, thereby giving deliverance to his soul. He finds complete peace and is at ease with himself while he is still living with his body on this earth. When the proper time comes, he discards his body like the cuticle of a snake and finds the final emancipation by escaping from it and merging himself with the supreme Brahm like the air trapped insight a vacant mud pot is merged imperceptibly, indistinguishably and irretrievably with the external, wide open space or wind element present outside the pot.]

आसनं पात्रलोपश्च संचयः शिष्यसंचयः । दिवास्वापो वृथालापो यतेर्बन्धकराणि षट् ॥९८॥

āsanam pātralopaśca saṁcayaḥ śiṣyasamcayaḥ /  
divāsvāpo vṛthālāpo yaterbandhakarāṇi ṣaṭ // 98 //

The following six things act as bondages or shackles for a Sanyasi— (i) to sit for a long time at a place (i.e. to stay or live for a long time at one single place), (ii) desire to have or carry a pot or vessel of any kind (because he is not expected to hoard anything, even food, as is clear in the next sentence), (iii) to collect, accumulate, store or hoard anything, (iv) to make disciples and collect a group of followers or admirors, (v) to sleep during the day, and (vi) to talk worthlessly and chatter endlessly (i.e. to gossip and make loose talk) (98).

वर्षाभ्योऽन्यत्र यत्स्थानमासनं तदुदाहृतम् । उक्तालब्वादिपात्राणामेकस्यापीह संग्रहः ॥९९॥  
यतेः संव्यवहाराय पात्रलोपः स उच्यते । गृहीतस्य तु दण्डादेर्द्वितीयस्य परिग्रहः ॥१००॥

varṣābhyo'nyatra yatsthānamāsanam tadudāhṛtam /  
uktālābvā dipātrāṇāmekasyāpiha saṁgrahaḥ // 99 //  
yateḥ saṁvyavahārāya pātralopaḥ sa ucyate /  
grhītasya tu daṇḍāderdviṭīyasya parigrahaḥ // 100 //

Long habitation at a place except during the rainy season is called ‘taking an Aasan’ or living at a place for a long duration. [The word ‘Aasan’ means a seat, to sit for a long time; it also means sitting in meditation, meditative posture which are trance like states.]

Out of prescribed pots that he can have, he should carry only one, preferably one made from hollowed-out pumpkin. If he happens to lose it and takes the pot of another ascetic (as a replacement) it is tantamount to ‘a desire to have a pot’ or ‘greed for a pot’.

Similarly, when he loses his own personal staff/rod and takes one belonging to another ascetic, it is equivalent to ‘seizing another person’s property or asset’ or ‘usurping another’s asset or property’. [See also verse no. 112 herein below of this Upanishad in this context.] (99-100).

कालान्तरोपभोगार्थं संचयः परिकीर्तितः । शुश्रूषालाभपूजार्थं यशोऽर्थं वा परिग्रहः ॥१०१॥

kālāntaropabhogārthaṁ saṁcayaḥ parikīrtitaḥ /  
śuśrūṣālābhapūjārthaṁ yaśorthaṁ vā parigrahaḥ // 101 //

‘Sanchaya’ (saṁcayaḥ) is defined as storing or accumulating or hoarding anything for use in the future. The benefit or comfort of being served, to want to get worshiped, honoured or adored and acquire fame, name and renown are also tantamount to ‘Parigraha’ (i.e., the desire to seize, catch hold of, acquire, attach oneself to, to yearn for, to desire to have etc.) (101).

शिष्याणां नतु कारुण्याच्छिष्यसंग्रह ईरितः । विद्या दिवा प्रकाशत्वादविद्या रात्रिरुच्यते ॥१०२॥

śiṣyāṇāṁ natu kāruṇyācchiṣyasamgraha īritaḥ /  
vidyā divā prakāśatvādaavidyā rātrirucyate // 102 //

Only a person who approaches an ascetic (Sanyasi) with humility and understanding, who has a sincere desire for self-upliftment and emancipation, with a desire to follow the spiritual path that is followed by the Sanyasi himself so that this seeker too could emulate the Sanyasi and attain self-realisation and bliss—only such a seeker should be accepted as a disciple by the Sanyasi.

Other than such a seeker, making anyone else as disciple by a Sanyasi is called ‘Sishya Sangraha’ (i.e., collection of, or gathering a crowd of disciples and adoring persons around a Sanyasi—as it causes immense distraction and vexation for the Spirit of the ascetic and hinders his spiritual progress). [To wit, a Sanyasi should best live alone and desist from the temptation of collecting a crowd of admiring disciples around himself. See also verse no. 98 in this context.]

In Sanyas, ‘Vidya’ (knowledge) is regarded as being synonymous with ‘day’ (standing for light and illumination), while ‘Avidya’

(ignorance, lack of knowledge) is treated as ‘night’ (standing for darkness of ignorance and delusions) (102).

विद्याभ्यासे प्रमादे यः स दिवास्वाप उच्यते । आध्यात्मिकीं कथां मुक्त्वा भिक्षावार्तां विना  
तथा । अनुग्रहं परिप्रश्नं वृथाजल्पोऽन्य उच्यते ॥१०३॥

vidyābhyāse pramādo yaḥ sa divāsvāpa ucyate / ādhyātmikīṁ kathāṁ muktvā  
bhikṣāvārtāṁ vinā tathā / anugrahaṁ paripraśnaṁ vṛthājalo’nya ucyate //  
103 //

This is the reason why showing laziness in pursuit of truthful knowledge is regarded as being equivalent to ‘sleeping during the day’. Any talk except on spiritual matters, metaphysical topics, subjects pertaining to essential facets of the life of a Sanyasi, such as begging for food and seeking necessary alms and charities, and replying to polite questions on any of these subjects (when asked by someone), is regarded as futile banter, useless chatter, worthless gossip, loose talk and talking in vain (103).

एकान्नं मदमात्सर्यं गन्धपुष्पविभूषणम् । ताम्बूलाभ्यञ्जने क्रीडा भोगाकाङ्क्षा रसायनम् ॥१०४॥  
कत्थनं कुत्सनं स्वस्ति ज्योतिश्च क्रयविक्रयम् । क्रिया कर्मविवादश्च गुरुवाक्यविलङ्घनम्  
॥१०५॥  
सन्धिश्च विग्रहो यानं मञ्चकं शुक्लवस्त्रकम् । शुक्रोत्सर्गो दिवास्वापो भिक्षाधारस्तु तैजसम्  
॥१०६॥  
विषं चैवायुधं बीजं हिंसां तैक्ष्ण्यं च मैथुनम् । त्यक्तं संन्यासयोगेन गृहधर्मादिकं व्रतम्  
॥१०७॥  
गोत्रादिचरणं सर्वं पितृमातृकुलं धनम् । प्रतिषिद्धानि चैतानि सेवमानो व्रजेदधः ॥१०८॥

ekānnaṁ madamātsaryaṁ gandhapuṣpavibhūṣaṇam / tāmbūlābhyañjane  
krīḍā bhogākāṅkṣā rasāyanam // 104 //

katthanaṁ kutsanaṁ svasti jyotiśca kraya-vikrayam / kriyā karmavivādaśca  
guruvākyavilāṅghanaṁ // 105 //

saṁdhiśca vighraho yānaṁ mañcakaṁ śuklavastrakam / śuklotsargo divāsvāpo  
bhikṣādhārastu taijasam // 106 //

viṣaṁ caivāyudhaṁ bījaṁ hiṁsāṁ taikṣṇyaṁ ca maithunam / tyaktaṁ  
saṁnyāsayogena gr̥hadharmādikaṁ vratam // 107 //

gotrādicaraṇaṁ sarvaṁ pitṛmātr̥kulaṁ dhanam / pratiṣiddhāni caitāni  
sevamāno vrajedadhaḥ // 108 //

[The following five verses list the various prohibitions from which a Sanyasi/ascetic should keep himself at bay. Please also refer to verse nos. 93-98, 109-110 in this context.]

A Sanyasi/ascetic should completely and without any reservations of any kind or second thoughts forsake or discard the following —

(i) Eating one type of food or from one household repeatedly (*ekānnaṃ*); (ii) Pride, vanity, ego and haughtiness (*mada*); (iii) Envy, jealousy, ill-will, hatred and malice (*mātsaryaṃ*); (iv) Perfumes, aromatic sweet scents, fragrances of all kinds (*gandha*); (v) Flowers of all kinds (*puṣpa*); (vi) Ornaments and jewellery as well as other decorative paraphernalia or ornamentations for the body (*vibhūṣaṇaṃ*); (vii) Eating betel leaves as mouth fresheners (*tāmbūl*); (viii) Massaging the body with oil and other ointments or lubricants (*ābhyāñjana*); (ix) Participating in sports and all other forms of games (*kṛīḍā*); (x) Desires for gratification of the senses and enjoying the pleasures and comforts of the objects of the world (*bhogākāṅkṣā*); (xi) Use of chemicals or any kind of drugs (*rasāyanaṃ*); [104]

(xii) Indulging in flattery, false praise and honour, sycophancy, repeated pleadings and coaxing others to gain anything for one's self; useless talk and gossip (*katthanaṃ*); (xiii) Criticism, speaking ill of and finding fault with others (*kutsanaṃ*); (xiv) Asking about and taking interest in other people's well-being, and enquiring about their personal affairs (*svasti*); (xv) Asking unnecessary, impertinent questions about the future (e.g., such as approaching astrologers, soothsayers, clairvoyants etc.) (*jyotiśca*); (xvi) Talking of trade and commerce and other things related to material gain/profit or loss (*kṛaya-vikrayaṃ*); (xvii) Talking about routine worldly chores, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments and other formalities pertaining to the gross mortal world (*kriyā karma*); (xviii) Getting involved in debates, discourses, disputes, discussions and controversies (*vivādaśca*); (xix) Disobeying the orders of one's Guru (moral preceptor and teacher) (*guruvākyavilāṅghanaṃ*); [105]

(xx) Talk of either confrontation or compromise with anyone, whether a friend or a foe (*saṃdhiśca vighraho*); (xxi) To have a vehicle to mount on, or a mattress/bedstead to sleep upon (*yānaṃ mañcakaṃ*); (xxii) Wearing white, clean clothes (i.e., washed and ironed, good looking and attractive garments) (*śuklavastrakaṃ*); (xxiii) Ejaculation of sperms (i.e. lack of continence and self-restraint over the sex organs as well as failure to control the mind's sexual instincts) (*śuklotsargo*); (xxiv) Sleeping during the day time (*divāsvāpo*); (xxv) Carrying a metal pot, even on the pretext of keeping a bowl to beg (for a Sanyasi is expected to take food in his cupped palms, or if it is at all necessary then keep a bowl of wood or hollowed-out pumpkin) (*bhikṣādhāraṣṭu*); (xxvi) Any valuable metal having shine and monetary value (such as a begging bowl or a staff) (*taijasaṃ*); [106]

(xxvii) Carrying poisonous or intoxicating or harmful things (e.g. drugs which are harmful and hallucinating, and are therefore like a poison) (*viṣaṃ*); (xxviii) Carrying arms and armaments; any variant of a thing that can be called a weapon (*caivāyudhaṃ*); (xxix) Violence and cruelty

towards other creatures, even in a rudimentary manner (bījaṃ hiṃsāṃ); (xxx) Anger, wrath and vengeance (taikṣṇyaṃ); and (xxxi) Having sex (ca maithunam).

Verily indeed, all these should be completely and absolutely forsaken and abhorred outright by a true and sincere Sanyasi/ascetic (tyaktam saṃnyāsayogena).

Further, a Sanyasi is also required to abstain from the following (i.e., he is expected to completely forsake or avoid them also)— (xxxii) The codes of conduct and norms of behaviours prescribed for householders (gṛhadharmādikaṃ vratam) [107],

(xxxiii) The codes of conduct and norms of behaviour prescribed for other classes and clans in the society (in addition to those of the householders) (gotrādicaraṇaṃ), and (xxxiv) Inheriting and enjoying any kind of parental property (sarvaṃ pitṛmātrkulaṃ dhanam).

Verily indeed, a Sanyasi who adheres or attaches himself to any of these three (from s. nos. xxxii to xxxiv) is condemned to a lowly stature. They are prohibited from all these things (as listed in these five verses) and are ordained, or directed and expected to keep a safe distance from them (pratiṣiddhāni caitāni sevamāno vrajedadhaḥ ) [108] [104-108].

सुजीर्णोऽपि सुजीर्णासु विद्वांस्त्रीषु न विश्वसेत् । सुजीर्णास्वपि कन्थासु सज्जते जीर्णमम्बरम् ॥१०९॥

sujīrṇo'pi sujīrṇāsu vidvāmstrīṣu na viśvaset /  
sujīrṇāsvapi kanthāsu sajjate jīrṇamambaram // 109 //

A wise and erudite Sanyasi who has become old of age should not have faith even upon an old woman. [That is, he shouldn't be in the company of or have contact with any woman whomsoever, notwithstanding her old age.]

This is because a coat or jacket that is made of used and discarded cotton that has been patted and sewn together also clings to the body and becomes difficult for the Sanyasi to discard if he becomes used to it, as it gives him comfort and warmth, even though he knows that basically this coat or jacket is made of nothing but useless and tattered pieces of discarded clothes and rags (109).

[Note :- A Sanyasi should be careful and diligent in exercising self control because even an old woman can cling to him and arouse his passion and sympathies, and tie him down to worldly relationships even as old cloth and pieces of rag, which are seemingly worthless and useless, help in sewing and hemming together pieces of patted cotton tatters to make a garment, such as an overcoat. Without the old cloth as the covering, the shreds of cotton would fall apart and scatter. The company of a woman might hem in and tie down the ascetic (Sanyasi) and prevent him from finding absolute liberation which is a prerequisite for deliverance and dissolution into nothingness, leaving behind no



memories or attachments of any kind that linger on after his death. The contact with the old woman, even though she might be his own mother, might cause some attachment in the heart of the Sanyasi towards this world and create worry for her well being, should he die before her.]

स्थावरं जङ्गमं बीजं तैजसं विषमायुधम् । षडेतानि न गृह्णीयाद्यतिर्मूत्रपुरीषवत् ।११०॥

sthāvaraṃ jaṅgamaṃ bījaṃ taijasaṃ viṣamāyudham /  
ṣaḍetāni na gr̥hṇīyādya-tirmūtrapuriṣavat // 110 //

A Sanyasi should never accept the company of (i.e., possess) any of the following six— (i) immovable and or (ii) movable assets (sthāvaraṃ jaṅgamaṃ); (iii) seeds or grains (bījaṃ), (iv) gold or other valuable metals having luster, shine and dazzle (i.e. monetary value and worldly charms) (taijasaṃ), (i) harmful and hallucinating drugs that are like a poison (such as opium) (viṣa), (vi) arms and armaments or any kind of weapon (such as an axe, a bow and arrow, or even a trident that can be used to harm other creatures) (māyudham).

He should abhor and treat them with the same contempt and disdain as one treats urine and faecal matters; he should not touch any of the above things (ṣaḍetāni na gr̥hṇīyādya-tirmūtrapuriṣavat) (110).

[Note :- Please also refer to verse no. 93-98 and 104-108.]

नैवाददीत पाथेयं यतिः किञ्चिदनापदि । पक्वमापत्सु गृह्णीयाद्यावदन्नं न लभ्यते ।१११॥

naivādadīta pātheyaṃ yatiḥ kiñcidanāpadi /  
pakvamāpatsu gr̥hṇīyādya-vadannaṃ na labhyate // 111 //

Except carrying necessary items to meet emergencies, a Sanyasi should not carry anything with him during his wanderings. If he cannot find bland and ordinary food to eat, then in cases of extreme emergencies and unavoidable circumstances, he can accept fried and spiced food (111).

[Note :- Verse no. 76 says that he should not accept any food which might fatten him; verse nos. 93-95 and 97 list the various foods which are proscribed. Now in this verse, the above restriction on a Sanyasi is lifted in situations where he has no option but to partake of richly cooked food. This, and other such instances, show that the rules are not so rigid and inviolable and sacrosanct that their following can mean causing undue hardships and suffering to the Sanyasi. The rules are to act as guidelines which a Sanyasi is supposed to follow for his own benefit under normal circumstances. A true Sanyasi will be a renouncer of the world from his heart and not by external show or useless and meaningless dos and don'ts. This view is endorsed in verse no. 90 which emphasises that purity comes from within and not from without, and nothing external can ever pollute or corrupt a clean heart if the cleanliness is from within,

and it is sincere and honest. There is no prudence, wisdom and sense in dying of hunger just to be trying to be rigidly following rules and regulations, for they are merely aids in spiritual pursuit and not the object of those pursuits.]

नीरुजश्च युवा चैव भिक्षुर्नावसथे वसेत् । परार्थं न प्रतिग्राह्यं न दद्याच्च कथंचन ॥११२॥

nīrujaśca yuvā caiva bhikṣurnāvasathe vaset /  
parārthaṁ na pratigrāhyaṁ na dadyācca kathaṁcana // 112 //

A healthy and youthful Sanyasi should never stay in any household. He should neither take nor borrow anything from anyone, and neither should he give or lend his own things to anyone else (112).

[Note :- This helps to prevent him from establishing any relationship with anybody, however perfunctory, superficial or transient. See also verse no. 99-101.]

दैत्यभावात्तु भूतानां सौभगाय यतिश्चरेत् । पक्वं वा यदि वाऽपक्वं याचमानो व्रजेदधः ॥११३॥

dainyabhāvāttu bhūtānāṁ saubhagāya yatiścaret /  
pakvaṁ vā yadi vā'pakvaṁ yācamāno vrajedadhaḥ // 113 //

A Sanyasi should show compassion and kindness to other living beings.

Asking for food —whether cooked or uncooked —is forbidden for him. [To wit, as has been said earlier, he should go out to beg for food in a random manner, without determining before hand to expect anything from a particular household or place. He should not ask specifically for anything, and should accept whatever comes his way in a routine manner.] (113).

[Note :- This verse should be interpreted properly. A Sanyasi should not ask for food for himself if there is someone near him who is hungry. It is his moral duty to let the other creature, who is hungry, to eat first —i.e., to show compassion and mercy, empathy and sympathy, kindness and graciousness towards others, even if it means going hungry himself. If the food is only sufficient enough to feed the other person and the Sanyasi cannot find anything to eat himself, he is not expected to ask for food again. This is the correct and holistic interpretation of this verse.

Besides this, it also means that he should accept whatever is offered to him and not demand this or that type of food or be fussy about it. Since he is not supposed to store any food or cook himself, there is no sense in asking for uncooked raw food, and since he is supposed to have conquered his taste buds, demanding a particular type of cooked food which might titillate his taste buds is also out of the question. So, in essence, he should quietly accept whatever is given or offered to him as alms or charity.]

अन्नपानपरो भिक्षुर्वस्त्रादीनां प्रतिग्रही । आविकं वानाविकं वा तथा पट्टपटानपि ॥११४॥  
 प्रतिगृह्य यतिश्चैतान्यतत्येव न संशयः । अद्वैतं नावमाश्रित्य जीवन्मुक्तत्वमाप्नुयात् ॥११५॥

annapānaparo bhikṣurvastrādīnāṃ pratigrahī /  
 āvikam vānāvikam vā tathā paṭṭapaṭānapi // 114 //  
 pratigrhya yatiścaitānpatatyeva na saṃśayaḥ /  
 advaitam nāvamāśritya jīvanmuktatvamāpnuyāt // 115 //

Having a constant desire for tasty food and good clothes made of wool or silk, and even for clothes which are not woollen and silken but new and of good quality nevertheless, and accepting such food and/or clothes (even in the form of charity or alms), is sure to degrade, denigrate or demote a Sanyasi from his high stature. His dignity, honour, respect and spiritual upliftment will take a beating, as it were (because desires and expectations, which should be the bane of a good Sanyasi, are still present in his heart).

Instead of all these worldly trivial pursuits, he should ride the boat of non-dual realisation of the Atma and Brahm, and consequentially endeavour to attain the exalted stature of being liberated and delivered from the mundane, artificial, deceptive and entrapping world surrounding him, and become free from its entrapping shackles inspite of physically living in it and bearing his gross body (like a yoke) before it is finally shed at the time of death (114-115).

[Note :- The example of a boat is noteworthy here. When a man wishes to cross a river, he steps onto a boat. As soon as he steps into it, he has shaken off his contact with the ground. These are symbolic metaphors. The world is represented by the ground at the bank of the river which the person has just left, the boat is the realisation of the non-dual essential nature of the Atma and Brahm, the water of the river symbolises the various trappings of the world which can very easily drown a person if he steps out of this boat even by mistake, and the passenger of the boat is the Sanyasi himself. The other side of the river is the ultimate salvation which the passenger, or the Sanyasi, is aiming to reach or attain. Once he has ridden the boat, he should aim to get across as soon as possible and step ashore in the world of emancipation and salvation on the other side of the river at the end of his journey symbolising his life in this world.

If there is a hole, even a tiny one in the boat, the latter would sink midstream. All the prohibitions listed in this Upanishad are meant to ensure that this boat of renunciation does not sink. They are a kind of precautions that a Sanyasi should take, and preliminary checks that he should carry out to ensure a safe journey for himself.]

वाग्दण्डे मौनमातिष्ठेत्कायदण्डे त्वभोजनम् । मानसे तु कृते दण्डे प्राणायामो विधीयते ॥११६॥

vāgdaṇḍe maunamātiṣṭhetkāyadaṇḍe tvabhōjanam /  
mānase tu kṛte daṇḍe prāṇāyāmo vidhīyate // 116 //

If a Sanyasi wishes to punish his ‘speech’ (for inadvertently violating its rules of conduct), he should keep quiet. [That is to say, if a Sanyasi finds that he has spoken something which he should not have, the best thing for him is to observe silence. It is the best way to atone for his mistake.]

If he wishes to punish his ‘body’, he should not eat (i.e., he ought to observe fast).

If he wishes to punish his ‘Mana’ (heart and mind), he should practice ‘Pranayam’ (which is a meditative exercise where the flow of breath is regulated and controlled) (116).

कर्मणा बध्यते जन्तुर्विद्यया च विमुच्यते । तस्मात्कर्म न कुर्वन्ति यतयः पारदर्शिनः ॥११७॥

karmaṇā badhyate janturvidyayā ca vimucyate /  
tasmātkarma na kurvanti yatayaḥ pāradarśinaḥ // 117 //

All creatures are tied down by their deeds, and are liberated by self-realisation. For this reason, a wise Sanyasi should keep away from getting or allowing himself from being involved in doing deeds (117).

[Note :- What is implied here is that a Sanyasi should remain detached, dispassionate and indifferent to the deeds that he has to do while he is alive in this world.]

रथ्यायां बहुवस्त्राणि भिक्षा सर्वत्र लभ्यते ।  
भूमिः शय्यास्ति विस्तीर्णा यतयः केन दुःखिताः ॥११८॥

rathyāyāṃ bahuvastrāṇi bhikṣā sarvatra labhyate /  
bhūmiḥ śayyāsti vistīrṇā yatayaḥ kena duḥkhitaḥ // 118 //

Old clothes and tatters (e.g., rags) are available in non-descript lanes (i.e., even in ordinary households); food as charity is also available everywhere. The earth has ample place where he (Sanyasi) can lie down to sleep (and relax his physical body). Then say, what problems do a Sanyasi have? (118).

प्रपञ्चमखिलं यस्तु ज्ञानोऽग्नौ जुहुयाद्यतिः ।  
आत्मन्यग्नीन्समारोप्य सोऽग्निहोत्री महायतिः ॥११९॥

prapañcamakhilaṃ yastu jñānāgnau juhuyādyatiḥ /  
ātmanyagnīnsamāropya so’gnihotrī mahāyatiḥ // 119 //

A Sanyasi should burn to ashes all his delusions, ignorance and misconceptions in the fire of wisdom, erudition, truthful knowledge and enlightenment. The person that establishes this fire in his inner-self or his Atma is called very wise, most erudite and highly enlightened. His is also called ‘Agnihotri’ or a person who performs the holy fire sacrifice (and is deemed to be the beneficiary of all the blessing, boons, goodness and virtues which such fire sacrifices bestow upon the seeker or aspirant) (119).

प्रवृत्तिर्द्विविधा प्रोक्ता मार्जरी चैव वानरी । ज्ञानाभ्यासवतामोतुर्वानरीभाक्तमेव च ॥१२०॥

pravṛttirdvividhā proktā mārjārī caiva vānarī /  
jñānābhāsyasavatāmo-turvānarībhāktvameva ca // 120 //

A Sanyasi basically has two types of inherent tendencies or inclinations of the heart and mind — the first is ‘Maarjari’ (mārjārī)<sup>1</sup> and the other is ‘Vaananari’ (vānarī)<sup>2</sup>. Those who practice and follow the path of Gyan (truthful knowledge about the Atma and Brahm) have the former quality in predominance, while those in whom this tendency is dormant have the latter quality as their predominant characteristic. Therefore, those Sanyasi who have an inherent, inborn bend of mind towards Brahm and the supreme truth are called ‘Maarjari’, and they might have cultivated this wisdom by studying of scriptures and paying attention to preaching of the tenets and doctrines of the scriptures and their elucidation by experts. On the contrary, those who lack their own wisdom and erudition, their own intelligence and discriminatory powers, and do as they are told, are called ‘Vaananari’ (120).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The word *Maarjari* (mārjārī) means a ‘broom, a wiper’; its adjective is ‘Marjit’ meaning ‘cleansed, refined, purified’. Hence, a Sanyasi with predominance of the ‘Maajari’ quality are those who have cleansed or refined their inner-self with the aid of truthful knowledge about the pure self, about Brahm, about the oneness (or non-dual nature) of them, about the basic pureness and sublimity of their true self, about their true self being as pure consciousness and bliss, about the falsehood of this external artificial world and their bodies which interacts with such a world.

<sup>2</sup>The word *Vaanar* (vānar) refers generally to the monkeys. Hence, those in whom wisdom and enlightenment is dormant and they have taken to Sanyas as a matter of course, have a monkey-like tendency —restless, quarrelsome, desirous and nibbling constantly at food, lack self-restraint in every matter, keep company, keep clinging to this dead and gross world like a she-monkey clinging to its young one, lack of wisdom, and having animal-like instincts. Such persons must learn from the scriptures about the virtues of Sanyas and first learn to tame themselves before adopting that way of life. They must do as they are told to do by their seniors and Gurus (moral preceptors, teachers or guides).

Conversely, the word 'Vaanaar' also means 'a person who is well steeped in the knowledge of Brahm'. Kenopanishad 4/6 states that the word 'Van' means a forest; it also means 'Brahm'. The word 'Vaan' therefore means someone who 'resides in a forest' or 'someone who resides with Brahm'. So, such persons, though not as learned as their Maarjari bretherens, are nevertheless entitled to the attainment of Brahm through obtaining emancipation by Sanyas.]

नापृष्टः कस्यचिद्ब्रूयान्न चान्यायेन पृच्छतः ।  
जानन्नपि हि मेधावी जडवल्लोक आचरेत् ॥१२१॥

nāpṛṣṭaḥ kasyacidbrūyānna cānyāyena pṛcchataḥ /  
jānannapi hi medhāvī jaḍavalloka ācaret // 121 //

A Sanyasi should not speak unless spoken to. He should also not answer questions which are apparently unrighteous, degrading, cunning, mischievous, crafty, impertinent, unjustified and asked just for the sake of asking anything to initiate some kind of discussion.

Inspite of possessing wisdom and knowledge, he should pretend to be stupid, foolish and ignorant in public (because this will ensure that no one troubles him with unnecessary questions and queries, and the people would leave him alone). [See also verse no. 98.] (121).

सर्वेषामेव पापानां सङ्घाते समुपस्थिते । तारं द्वादशसाहस्रमभ्यसेच्छेदनं हि तत् ॥१२२॥

sarveṣāmeva pāpānāṃ saṅghāte samupasthite /  
tāraṃ dvādaśasāhasramabhyasecchedanaṃ hi tat // 122 //

If due to unavoidable circumstances, a Sanyasi inadvertently commits any sin or other misdeeds of any kind, then he should absolve (free) himself of its bad effect or wash it off or dispel it by repeating the famous 'Tarak Mantra' (tāraṃ) twelve thousand times (dvādaśasāhasrama) (122).

[Note :- There are said to be two 'Tarak Mantras'. One is "OM", and a Sanyasi should repeat this Mantra. "OM" is the Mantra for the supreme Brahm, the personified form of the supreme Consciousness. Refer the next verse no. 123, The concept of "OM" has been explained fully by this author in his book "OM and Naad" that has been published separately.

The other 'Tarak Mantra' pertains to Lord Sri Ram, and it is revealed in Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad. It is 'OM RANG RAMAYE NAMAHA'. A full English version of this Upanishad along with others pertaining to Sri Ram has been published separately by this author under the title 'Anthology of Upanishads dedicated to Lord Ram'.]

यस्तु द्वादशसाहस्रं प्रणवं जपतेऽन्वहम् । तस्य द्वादशभिर्मसैः परं ब्रह्म प्रकाशते इत्युपनिषद् ॥१२३॥

yastu dvādaśasāhasraṃ praṇavaṃ japate'nvaham /  
tasya dvādaśabhirmāsaiḥ paraṃ brahma prakāśate// ityupaniṣat // 123 //

A Sanyasi who repeats the divine word “OM” representing Brahm or ‘Pranav’ twelve thousand times daily is able to witness and experience the supreme, sublime, transcendental Brahm in a short period of nearly 12 months. This is verily the spiritual secret meant for Sanaysis as affirmed in this Upanishad (123).

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### (2.5) Kundiko-panishad:

In this Upanishad belonging to the Sam Veda tradition, the period of life called ‘Sanyas’ is described in detail. This is the phase in the life of a man when the householders hands over the responsibilities of his worldly affairs to his heirs and, renouncing all his links with this world, he becomes a wondering mendicant and heads for the forest. There he leads an austere life full of rigors, spends his time in contemplation and meditation on the ultimate truth, gradually elevating himself spiritually to finally attain salvation.

Technically speaking, stepping out of the house and going to the forest is called ‘Vaanprastha’, but it is a stepping stone for ‘Sanyas’. Similarly, if the true essence of Sanyas is taken into count, then even the first stage in the life of a man when he is a student under the tutelage of a wise teacher, the phase when he is a Brahmachari, at that time he can also become a Sanyasi because a Brahmacharya Ashram also requires the same stringent life as expected of a Sanyasi. Likewise, a householder, who follows the basic tenets of Sanyas in his heart and mind while doing his worldly duties with dispassion and total detachment from them, also comes under the ambit of Sanyas.

This Upanishad describes the regulations to be followed by a Sanyasi and details his way of life. It should be read in conjunction with other Upanishads on the subject of Sanyas, such as Aarunyu-panishad and Sanyaso-panishad.

The Holy Bible enunciates the reasons why a man should renounce his household and other worldly affairs and take to Sanyas— ‘And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that take it not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it’ (Gospel of St. Matthew, 10/36-39).

ब्रह्मचर्याश्रमे क्षीणे गुरुशुश्रूषणे रतः । वेदानधीत्यानुज्ञात उच्यते गुरुणाश्रमी ॥१॥

brahmacaryāśrame kṣīṇe guruśuśrūṣaṇe rataḥ /  
vedānadhītyānujñāta ucyate guruṇāśramī // 1 //

At the completion of ‘Brahmacharya Ashram’<sup>1</sup>, when the student has completed his formal study of the Vedas under the tutelage of a wise teacher, he should take permission from the Guru, whom he has been serving during his student days, to go home. Such a person who has got his Guru’s permission to go home is called ‘Ashrami’ (1).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The life of a man has been divided by the Vedas into four segments of roughly twenty-five years each. The first phase is called ‘Brahmacharya Ashram’, which is the phase when a man studies the scriptures under an erudite teacher. During this period, he is expected to lead an austere life, observing strict rules of discipline and conduct. This helps him to concentrate in his studies. When he is fully educated, he enters the second phase of life called ‘Grihastha Ashram’, which is the householder’s life. During this second phase, he marries, raises a family and takes care of it, looking after the welfare of his compatriots and dependents in the process. He also enhances his prosperity and wealth. At the end of this phase, when he is around 50 years of age, he should handover the affairs of the household and the world to his son or any other heir, and look forward to the next phase of life of renunciation. During this third phase, he should de-link himself from routine involvement in the day to day running of the household and other worldly affairs, remain detached from them, and finally move out of the house altogether and head for the forest. This is done to leave the new generation to itself, and if the need arises, the renunciate parent can give wise advice. This phase is called ‘Vaanprastha Ashram’, literally meaning ‘those who go to live in the forest’. This Ashram is a phase between the second and the last phase of life. After Vaanprastha comes the ‘Sanyas Ashram’. This Upanishad deals with the last phase called the Sanyas Ashram and describes in detail the life that is expected of them to be lead. During this phase, the person has no links at all with the world; he contemplates upon his Atma and Brahm, and like a wise person prepares himself for the final exit from this world to obtain salvation.]

दारमाहृत्य सदृशमग्निमाधाय शक्तिः । ब्राह्मीमिष्टिं यजेत्तासामहोरात्रेण निर्वपेत् ॥२॥

dāramāhṛtya sadṛśamagnimādhāya śaktiḥ /  
brāhmīmīṣṭiṃ yajettāsāmaho-rātreṇa nirvapet // 2 //

It is expected of a wise man that he would accept a wife who is compatible to and emotionally in tune with him, light the fire of the household (i.e.,



enter into the second phase of life as a householder and take up the responsibility of lightening and keeping the hearth warm and lighted in his home so that his family is well fed and looked after) and keep it burning with the faith that he is symbolically performing the sacrificial fire dedicated to the supreme Brahm. With this conviction, he should lead a life which is in accordance with the principles laid out for this phase (2).

[Note :- The very thought that his householder's life and its incumbent responsibilities and problems are a part of the wider spectrum of sacrifices that a man must make to purify and uplift himself towards the supreme Brahm, which is the ultimate destination where an erudite soul should aim for, will make all his activities automatically become religiously inclined and injected with the element of righteousness. Without any prodding or coercion, such a man will himself, on his own account, lead a regulated, righteous, virtuous, non-indulgent and a dispassionate life because his intellect would be consistently directing him and making him aware of the fact that each of his actions are like an offering given to the formal religious sacrificial holy fire. Even as a man performing any religious ritual does it with fervour, faith, devotion and humility if he is sincere about that ritual, and not doing it for cheating others, such a man's outlooks towards life and its requirements and demands undergo a sea change. He is no more a man of senses who is a prisoner to his desires and gratifications, but instead he becomes an enlightened person who does everything in a dispassionate and detached manner based on the merit of the case, and always thinking that each of his action are like one offering to the holy fire lit during the second phase of the life. This stage of life is called 'Grihastha Ashram'.]

संविभज्य सुतानर्थे ग्राम्यकामान्विसृज्य च । संचरन्वनमार्गेण शुचौ देशे परिभ्रमन् ॥३॥

saṁvibhajya sutānarthē grāmyakāmānvisrjya ca /  
saṁcaranvanamārgēṇa śucau deśe paribhraman // 3 //

At the end of his term as a householder, he should distribute his wealth amongst his sons (heirs), delegate all his authorities and powers to them, and after handing over all his responsibilities pertaining to his household and the village (i.e., the society, community, worldly affairs) to them, he should finally depart from his house and head for the forest as a wondering mendicant. After leaving the house, he should first roam in the holy places (i.e., go on a journey of pilgrimage) before going to the forest for good (3).

[Note :- This is the third phase of life called 'Vaanprastha'. See note to verse no. 1 and 6 also.]

वायुभक्षोऽम्बुभक्षो वा विहितैः कन्दमूलकैः । स्वशरीरे समाप्याथ पृथिव्यां नाश्रु पातयेत् ॥४॥

vāyubhakṣo'mbubhakṣo vā vihitaiḥ kandamūlakaiḥ /

svaśarīre samāpyātha pṛthivyām nāśru pātayet // 4 //

[Now, the life and times of a Sanyasi who is a person who has totally forsaken the world, who lives in seclusion in a forest in preparation for death and his ultimate salvation, is being described in the following verses—]

A Sanyasi (a renunciate and wandering ascetic or a mendicant) should protect his body (survive) by eating wind and drinking water. If that is too harsh for him, he should eat edible roots, stems and bulbs. He should treat this world as being limited to this gross body and never shed tears for it (i.e., he should remain even in the case of joys or sorrows, of agony of separation from his dear ones and happiness of union with them)<sup>1</sup> (4).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>A ‘Sanyasi’ should treat all the relationships with this world as being limited to his body which is not his true identity, because his pure or truthful self is the Atma and not the body. The gross body belongs to the world, and when the world has been forsaken, the body automatically loses its relevance and must also be forsaken. The pure or truthful self of the Sanyasi is his Atma which belongs to the supreme soul or Brahm. In other words, a rightful Sanyasi realises that his true dear one is Brahm and not the world. The distinction between his true near and dear one, the Brahm, and his false near and dear one, the world, becomes clear to him. As a result, he longs to reach Brahm and move away from the world.]

सह तेनैव पुरुषः कथं संन्यस्त उच्यते । सनामधेयो यस्मिंस्तु कथं संन्यस्त उच्यते ॥५॥

saha tenaiva puruṣaḥ katham saṁnyasta ucyate /  
sanāmadheyo yasmim̐stu katham saṁnyasta ucyate // 5 //

But it should be clarified that by merely observing these simple and basic vows (as noted in the above verses) will not make a person a ‘true Sanyasi’, for this is just a fraction of the whole gamut of regulations and tenets that are to be observed by him before he is elevated to an exalted stature of a ‘true Sanyasi’. The way of life, the rules of conduct, the ethics, the vows and the tenets to be observed by him are more profound, are of much greater importance, have a broader impact and cover a wider range of activities than merely eating fruits etc. (5).

तस्मात्फलविशुद्धाङ्गी संन्यासं संहितात्मनाम् । अग्निवर्णं विनिष्क्रम्य वानप्रस्थं प्रपद्यते ॥६॥

tasmātphalaviśuddhāṅgī saṁnyāsaṁ saṁhitātmanām /  
agnivarṇaṁ viniṣkramya vānaprasthaṁ prapadyate // 6 //

For this (i.e., to become a true renunciate Sanyasi who wonders like a mendicant in search of the ultimate truth), one should have no desires for

any reward or enjoyment of benefits for observing the stringent ethics and moral codes of conduct pertaining to any one of the 4 classes of the society to which that person belongs. He should enter Sanyas Ashram with the express intention of attaining ultimate emancipation and salvation. He should leave his household fire behind (i.e., he should completely detach himself from his home and its affairs) before proceeding to the forest as a 'Vaanprastha'. (See note to verse nos. 1 and 3 also) (6).

लोकवद्भार्ययाऽऽसक्तो वनं गच्छति संयतः । संत्यक्त्वा संसृतिसुखमनुतिष्ठति किं मुधा ॥७॥

lokavadbhāryayā"sakto vanaṃ gacchati saṃyataḥ /  
saṃtyaktvā saṃsṛtisukha-manutiṣṭhati kiṃ mudhā // 7 //

What is the benefit of going to the forest to get involved in observing so many severe austerities and following so many strict codes of conduct and leading a rigorous way of life after abandoning the comforts of the household and not remaining contented with the comforts obtained from a wife and other worldly objects like any other person? (7).

किंवा दुःखमनुस्मृत्य भोगांस्त्यजति चोच्छ्रितान् ।  
गर्भवासभयाद्भूतः शीतोष्णाभ्यां तथैव च ॥८॥

kiṃvā duḥkhamanusmṛtya bhogāṃstyajati cocchritān /  
garbhavāsabhayād-bhūtaḥ śītoṣṇābhyāṃ tathaiva ca // 8 //

Scared of the prospects of having to dwell in the hellish environs of a mother's womb and taking birth only to suffer from cold and heat, extremes of sorrows and joys leading to restlessness, perplexities, consternations, confoundedness and uncertainties in this world, why does a man willingly abandon the comforts and pleasures derived from the materialistic world and head for the forest to lead the rigorous and stern life of a Sanyasi? (8).

गुह्यं प्रवेष्टुमिच्छामि परं पदमनामयमिति । संन्यस्याग्निमपुनरावर्तनं यन्मृत्युर्जायमावहमिति ।  
अथाध्यात्ममन्त्राज्जपेत् । दीक्षामुपेयात्काषायबासाः । कक्षोपस्थलोमानि वर्जयेत् ।  
ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विमुक्तमार्गो भवति । अनिकेतश्चरेद्भिक्षाशी । निदिध्यासनं दध्यात् ॥९॥

guhyaṃ praveṣṭumicchāmi paraṃ padamanāmayamiti / saṃnyasyāgnima-  
punarāvartanaṃ yanmrītyurjāyamāvahamiti / athādhyātmamantrāñjapet /  
dīkṣāmupeyātkāṣāyavāsāḥ / kakṣopasthalomāni varjayet / ūrdhva-bāhur-  
vimuktamārgo bhavati / aniketaścaredbhikṣāśī / nididhyāsanam dadhyāt // 9  
//

The subtle reason why that person who becomes a Sanyasi goes to such an extent of taking these great troubles and decides to face all the difficulties and rigors associated with a harsh life of a forest dwelling renunciate and a wandering mendicant or a reclusive monk is that he wishes to enter that supreme state of existence which is called 'Param Pad' (परम पद —literally, the supreme, most exalted stature, which is the attainment of emancipation and salvation, or being able to reach Brahm).

He always remembers the great God symbolising death, the Mahakaal who is Lord Shiva himself<sup>1</sup>. He constantly and persistently goes on repeating the various spiritual Mantras (divine words). He accepts initiation into this bold path of Sanyas by accepting its stringent vows and wears ocher cloth.

Excepting the hairs on the abdomen and around the genitals, he should get all other hairs on other parts of the body shaved. He lifts both his hands upwards towards the sky<sup>2</sup> and wonders in all the directions as per his free will.

Without a house and hearth, he manages to live on food obtained by begging (or by alms seeking). He should spend his time in observing austerities and doing meditation (9).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>Lord Shiva is a patron God of renunciate ascetics. He is the greatest renunciate God and mythology depicts him in a perpetual state of contemplation and meditation. He is also the God of 'conclusion of life', or death. So, by constantly remembering Mahakaal, a form of Lord Shiva, a Sanyasi not only seeks the blessings of his patron deity (Lord Shiva) but also keeps himself aware of the imminent, overriding presence of death which would act as a guard against his falling prey to any temptations. Mahakaal would always remind him that death is fast approaching and he should be ware, as it were.

<sup>2</sup>This gesture of raising both the hands upwards towards the sky marks his total surrender and non-violent demeanour as well as to proclaim that he has nothing with him and nothing to hide; he has no enmity with anyone and he is headed towards the supreme Lord present in the heavens. The raised hands also symbolises his proclamation of being a Sanyasi and a token of his extended hands to welcome Brahm with an outstretched arm.]

पवित्रं धारयेज्जन्तुसंरक्षणार्थम् । तदपि श्लोका भवन्ति । कुण्डिकां चमसं शिष्यं  
त्रिविष्टपमुपानहौ । शीतोपघातिनीं कन्थां कौपीनाच्छादनं तथा पवित्रं स्नानशार्दी च  
उत्तरासङ्गमेव च । अतोऽतिरिक्तं यत्किञ्चित्सर्वं तद्वर्जयेद्यतिः ॥१०॥

pavitram dhārayejjantusamrakṣaṇārtham / tadapi ślokā bahvanti / kuṇḍikāṃ  
camasaṃ śikyaṃ triviṣṭapamupānahau / śītopaghātinīm kanthām  
kaupīnācchādanaṃ tathā // pavitram snānaśāṭīṃ ca uttarāsaṅgameva ca /  
ato'tiriktaṃ yatkiñcitsarvaṃ tadvarjayedyaṭiḥ // 10 //

There is a Sholka (a scriptural verse in the form of an edict) regarding what he should do. To protect himself from spirits, he should wear a 'Pavetri' which is a ring of Kush grass (a dark green grass called Kush that is used during religious ceremonies) worn on the ring finger. He should

carry a ‘Kamandal’ (a wooden pot or a hollowed out pumpkin shell to hold water etc.-- *kuṇḍikāṃ*) and a large tong with him (*camasaṃ*), wear a tuft of hair called ‘Shikha’ (*śikyam*) on his head and the mark of ‘Tilak’ called ‘Trivisṭap’ (*triviṣṭap*) on his body. For protecting himself from cold, he should keep a patted-cotton blanket (called a *kanthāṃ*).

Besides these, he should wear a loin cloth (called a *kaupīn*) and carry a towel and a body wrapping piece of cloth called ‘Dhoti’ with him which he should use to wrap his body (*ācchādanaṃ*). He should also carry a ‘Pavitri’ (*pavitram*) which is made of Kush grass and worn round a finger as a ring as a symbol of austerity, abstinence and observance of strict vows. This Pavitri is used by him for doing rituals after the bath (*snānaśāṭīṃ*). He should also carry a towel to cover the upper part of his body (*uttarāsaṅgameva*) to perform the sacrament rituals after taking his bath. Except these bare essentials, a Sanyasi should abandon everything else (10).

नदीपुलिनशायी स्यादेवागारेषु बाह्यतः । नात्यर्थं सुखदुःखाभ्यां शरीरमुपतापयेत् ॥११॥

nadīpulinaśāyī syāddevāgāreṣu bāhyataḥ /  
nātyarthaṃ sukhaduḥkhābhyāṃ śarīramupatāpayet // 11 //

If he (a Sanyasi) so wants, he can sleep on the banks of a clean river. It is not wise to unnecessarily subject the body to troubles and excitements (11).

स्नानं पानं तथा शौचमद्भिः पूताभिराचरेत् ।  
स्तूयमानो न तुष्येत निन्दितो न शपेत्परान् ॥१२॥

snānaṃ pānaṃ tathā śaucamadbhiḥ pūtābhirācaret /  
stūyamāno na tuṣyeta nindito na śapetparān // 12 //

Clean water should be used for taking a bath, drinking and going to attend to nature’s call. He (a Sanyasi) should neither feel elated at being honoured and praised, nor get annoyed and dismayed and curse anyone on being insulted and criticised (i.e., he should be tolerant, forbearing, patient, calm, unruffled and poised; he should have equanimity, equality and evenness in his attitude and behaviour) (12).

भिक्षादिवैदलं पात्रं स्नानद्रव्यमवारितम् । एवं वृत्तिमुपासीनो यतेन्द्रियो जपेत्सदा ॥१३॥

bhikṣādivaidalaṃ pātraṃ snānadravyamavāritam /  
evaṃ vṛttimupāsīno yatendriyo japetsadā // 13 //

He (a Sanyasi) should accept any pot available in which to beg and any clean water to bathe etc. By following this path which is said to be the best path for a Sanyasi and adopting this praise worthy demeanour, the self restrained ascetic should rather focus his attention in doing constant 'Japa' (repetition of the divine Mantra; here the Mantra should be OM which is the word symbol for Lord Brahm, the Supreme Being and a personified form of the cosmic supreme Consciousness) (13).

विश्वाय मनुसंयोगं मनसा भावयेत्सुधीः। आकाशद्वायुर्वायोर्योतिर्ज्योतिष आपोऽद्भ्यः पृथिवी ।  
एतेषां भूतानां ब्रह्म पपद्ये । अजरममरमक्षरमव्ययं प्रपद्ये । मय्यखण्डसुखाम्भोधौ  
बहुधा विश्ववीचयः । उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते मायामारुतविभ्रमात् ॥१४॥

viśvāya manusamyogaṃ manasā bhāvayetsudhīḥ / ākāśādvāyurvāyor-  
jyotirjyotiṣa āpo'dbhyaḥ pṛthivī / eteśāṃ bhūtānāṃ brahma prapadye /  
ajaramamaramakṣaramavyayaṃ prapadye / mayyakhaṇḍasukhāmbhodhau  
bahudhā viśvavīcayaḥ / utpadyante vilīyante māyāmārutavibhramāt // 14 //

A wise, erudite, sagacious and knowledgeable person should be firmly convinced of the fact and firmly believe that the cosmic form of Brahm (i.e., the vast universe visible to the eye) and the subtle form in the form of the soul of that cosmos, called 'Pranav' or OM, which in turn is called 'the imperishable word', are all synonymous with each other. The latter (i.e., OM) is also called 'Akshar Brahm' which has a dual meaning— one, 'Akshar' meaning a letter, so this Brahm is represented by the divine letters A, U, M constituting the word OM, and second, 'Akshar' meaning imperishable, immutable, eternal and that which does not decay and come to an end; so Brahm has these virtues also.

The seeker should be aware of the fact that the wind was produced from the sky, the light (fire) from the wind (due to friction), water from this fire (to cool it down), and earth from the water (due to sedimentation and solidification process). These five are called the basic elements or 'Bhoots' in metaphysics. [The 5 Bhoots are sky, wind, fire, water and earth.] The imperishable and immutable Brahm pervades uniformly in all these elements or 'Bhoots', thereby injecting them with the vitality and energy of life. The enlightened Sanyasi should firmly think that he has attained that same Brahm; that he has attained a stature which is equivalent to Brahm and marked by such characteristics as not being liable to decay and destruction, being eternal, imperishable, infinite and immutable.

He should think that he is an embodiment/image/personification of the endless ocean of supreme bliss.

Strong winds representing 'Maya' (worldly delusions, ignorance, hallucinations accompanied by attachments and infatuations with this world and their accompanying troubles, torments and miseries)<sup>1</sup> strike on my surface, creating waves which form and dissipate continuously. But these waves (representing the various agitations and perplexities, doubts and confusions, excitements and depressions, consternations and fears) are

only superficial and transient in nature; they do not represent my true form (which is the dense, fathomless and measureless body of water of the ocean of bliss and happiness, of beatitude and felicity in the form of my Atma, or enlightened and pure consciousness) (14).

[Note :- 'Maya' is a word which has two parts, Ma + Ya. The first half 'Ma' means 'to measure, mark off, by any standard; to show, to exhibit, to display; to infer, to conclude; to be formed, built, made of', while the second part 'Ya' means 'this or that'. Therefore the composite word Maya means neither this nor that; anything that is not real; that which is delusionary, illusionary, deceptive, mirage like and deceitful, and is caused by the ignorance about its truth and reality; something that has no substance or pith; displays no certainty and leads to wrong inference. The term Maya is used to define all these phenomenons. Hence, Maya is a synonym used for all that is deceptive, faulty, false, deluding, based on ignorance, illusionary and deceitful; all that which has no reality or substance; all that is hollow.

Maya has 3 basic constituent qualities. Hence it is called 'Trigunmayi', i.e., one which has the 3 Gunas or qualities. These 3 Gunas or qualities are— Sat, Raj and Tam. 'Sat' is the most auspicious, virtuous and noblest quality in a man and raises him to a high moral and spiritual pedestal. It marks predominance of righteousness and the highest standards of spirituals and mental evolvment leading to high thoughts, noble actions and righteous behaviour. 'Raj' is the medium quality in a person, and it is marked by worldly passions, desires, yearnings and greed. It makes a man more worldly than spiritual. 'Tam' is the third and most lowly of the three qualities and is used as a synonym for darkness and evil. Obviously, 'Tam' means ignorance, delusions and all the forces or qualities that are evil, mean, lowly, miserly, wicked and base. They pull down a man from high pedestal and virtually dump him in the dust yard of creation to rust and decay.

These three qualities together, in various permutations and combinations, decide the innate nature of a man. The greater presence of 'Sat' makes a man nobler as compared to a high ratio of 'Tam' which makes him wicked, pervert and evil. Various proportions of these qualities will therefore produce innumerable varieties of creatures having different temperaments, thought processes, behaviours, demeanours and mental setup in this world.]

न मे देहेन संबन्धो मेघेनेव विहायसः । अतः कुतो मे तद्धर्मा जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु ॥१५॥

na me dehena sambandho megheneva vihāyasaḥ /  
ataḥ kuto me taddharmā jāgratsvapnasuṣuptiṣu // 15 //

I do not have any relationship with the gross body of mine even as the sky has nothing to do with the cloud<sup>1</sup>. Hence, what do I, the pure conscious truthful Atma, have to do with the three states of existence of the body

such as the waking state (Jagrat), the dreaming state (Swapna), and the deep sleep state (Sushupta)? (15)

[Note :- 'The *cloud* appears to be in the sky, but it is obviously distinct from the subtle entity called the sky, for the latter stretches out infinitely into the deep recesses of space whereas the cloud is limited to a particular area of the sky. The cloud is so miniscule in comparison to the vastness of the space called the sky that it has no relevance in the larger perspective of things. Again, the sky is perpetual, infinite and uniform, whereas the cloud is transient, limited and ever changing in form. Similarly, the Atma is like the subtle, pure, vast, infinite, spotless and eternal space or sky while the body of the creature is like the cloud — gross, transient, unstable, ever-changing in shape and contours, always on the move and most inconsequential as well as burdened by the darkness of faults even as a cloud is a metaphor representing a shroud of ignorance and delusions because it obstructs the bright rays of the splendorous sun.]

आकाशवत्कल्पविदूरगोऽहमादित्यवद्भास्यविलक्षणोऽहम् ।  
अहार्यवन्नित्यविनिश्चलोऽहमम्भोधिवत्पारविवर्जितोऽहम् ॥१६॥

ākāśavatkalpavidūrago'hamādityavadbhāsyavilakṣaṇo'ham /  
ahāryavannitya-viniścalo'hamambhodhivatpāravivarjito'ham // 16 //

I, the Atma/soul of the creature, am beyond comprehension, imagination and reach like the fathomless space of the sky. I am distinct and pre-eminent like the Sun is among other bright objects in the sky. I am rock-stable like a mountain, and am vast like the ocean (16).

नारायणोऽहं नरकान्ताकोऽहं पुरान्तकोऽहं पुरुषोऽहमीशः ।  
अखण्डबोधोऽहमशेषसाक्षी निरीश्वरोऽहं निरहं च निर्ममः ॥१७॥

nārāyaṇo'haṁ narakāntako'haṁ purāntako'haṁ puruṣo'hamīśaḥ /  
akhaṇḍabodho'hamaśeṣasākṣī nirīśvaro'haṁ nirahaṁ ca nirmamaḥ // 17 //

I am Narayan (Lord Vishnu, the macrocosmic form of Brahm and also known as the 'Viraat Purush', the cosmic form of the Lord in the universe).

I am, verily and forsooth, also a personified form of 'Narkantak' (the Lord who slayed the demon Narkasur), 'Purantak' (Lord Shiva, who killed the demon Tripura), the 'Purush' (the Viraat Purush or the macrocosmic Male from whom the rest of the creation emerged; here referring to Lord Vishnu) and 'Ishwar' (the Lord of Gods). I am indeed an image of enlightenment and wisdom, erudition and sagacity. I am a witness to all the creatures (i.e., the whole creation), without a Lord over my head (i.e., I am the Lord of myself and I do not have to serve anyone



else; I am most senior and exalted, and I do not have to obey anyone else), am without an ‘Ahankar’ in me (i.e., I have no pride, ego, vanity and haughtiness in me) and have no ‘Mamta’ (attachment, endearments, infatuations and attractions) at all for this world in me. [That is, I am a personification of the exalted Trinity Gods, Lords Vishnu, Shiva and Brahma. I am the boss of my own self, and I do not have ‘Ahankar’ and other such denigrating characteristics in me which could lower my high stature to a lower profile.] (17).

तदभ्यासेन प्राणापानौ संयम्य तत्र श्लोका भवन्ति । वृषणापानयोर्मध्ये पाणी आस्थाय  
संश्रयेत् । संदश्य शनकैर्जिह्वां यवमात्रे विनिर्गताम् ॥१८॥

tadabhyāseṇa prāṇāpānau saṁyamya tatra ślokā bhavanti / vṛṣaṇāpānayor-  
madhye pāṇī āsthāya saṁśrayet / saṁdaśya śanakairjihvāṁ yavamātre  
vinirgatām // 18 //

[Now, how to harness the two vital winds called ‘Pran’ or breath and ‘Apan’ or the wind passing down the body is being described here. The reader is expected to also read the other Upanishads dealing with this subject —viz. Yog Chudamani Upanishad which is the 7<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition.]

The practitioner should place both his hands (palms) between the groins and the anus. The tongue should be gradually pressed by the teeth so that only a tiny tip of it, the size of a grain of barley, protrudes outside from between the teeth (18).

[Note :- This practice helps the seeker to exercise control over his organs of excretion and reproduction which are the anus and genitals respectively as well as the organs of touch, which is the hand, and the organ of speech and taste, which is the tongue.]

The idea expressed from verse nos. 18 till 22 is to exercise control over the various organs of perception in the body and to delink them from their respective senses. This helps to shut off all external disturbances which might interfere with contemplation upon the Atma or Brahm, the supreme Consciousness, and thereby enabling the Sanyasi to turn inwards and plunge in an ocean of complete peace, calmness and tranquility. This gives him pure bliss.]

माषमात्रां तथा दृष्टिं श्रोत्रे स्थाप्य तथा भुवि ।  
श्रवणे नासिके गन्धा यतः स्वं न च संश्रयेत् ॥१९॥

māṣamātrāṁ tathā dr̥ṣṭiṁ śrotre sthāpya tathā bhuvi /  
śravaṇe nāsike gandhā yataḥ svaṁ na ca saṁśrayet // 19 //

The sight of the eye should be focused on a small spot which is as tiny as a horse bean, on the ears and on the ground. This will prevent any smell

(or sound in the case of the ears) to enter the nostrils (and the ears) respectively (19).

[Note :- The Upanishadic sage/seer is referring to a point at the root of the nose and the inner portion of the ears which coincide with each other. It is a point where the nerves carrying the perceptions of sound and smell originating from the outside world or the 'earth element', come together and are coordinated to form a signal to the brain. The focusing of the eyes is symbolic of the laser beam which is directed at this spot, thereby burning these two nerve coordination point. This enables the seeker to exercise control over his organs of 'hearing' and 'smelling'. But to enable to do so, he has to close his eyes, thereby practically shutting off the perception of 'sight' as well.]

अथ शैवपदं यत्र तद्ब्रह्म ब्रह्म तत्परम् । तदभ्यासेन लभ्येत पूर्वजन्मार्जितात्मनाम् ॥२०॥

atha śaivapadaṃ yatra tadbrahma brahma tatparam /  
tadabhyāseṇa labhyeta pūrvajanmārjitātmanām // 20 //

He who constantly contemplates upon Brahm becomes an image of Brahm himself<sup>1</sup>; he is Shiva himself. [Here, the word Shiva means 'the truthful, the beautiful and enlightened one'. That is, once the person becomes aware of his true nature as being an image of Brahm, he becomes truthful, and truth is beauty and auspiciousness.]

That Brahm can only be attained by virtue of the accumulated good deeds done by a seeker in his previous life as well as by the sincerity of purpose, diligence, commitment and constant practice and having firm faith and conviction during the current phase of life<sup>2</sup> (20).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>It is true because there is an old adage 'what you think, so you become'.

<sup>2</sup>The good deeds and habits inspire a man to walk on the righteous and auspicious path as compared to evil deeds done by him which impel him to perversions and a demoting evil path. Constant practice of noble thoughts and contemplation upon the truth inculcates and enhances the already positive energy present in the seeker. By and by, it uplifts his soul to the stature which is equivalent to that of Brahm. The same creature can go down hill and sink into the pit of evils, vices, perversions and a stinking hell of his own creation if his past deeds are bad and corrupt and he does not attempt to overcome or rectify their denigrating, demoting and degenerating effects. So we deduce that whether a creature attains the highest of statures of being equivalent to Brahm or denigrates himself into a wriggling worm in a drain depends upon it and no one else.]

संभूतैर्वायुसंश्रावैर्हृदयं तप उच्यते । ऊर्ध्वं प्रपद्यते देहद्वित्वा मूर्धानमव्ययम् ॥२१॥

saṃbhūtairvāyusaṃśrāvairhṛdayaṃ tapa ucyate /

ūrdhvaṃ prapadyate dehādbhittvā mūrdhānamavyayam // 21 //

When the various wind forces of life act in tandem with each other, i.e., when they do not move or blow haphazardly at random but are directed towards a particular direction through a proper channel, the frequencies of the energy waves contained in them overlap each other. This overlapping enhances their subtle strength and power, and they start resonating with greater energy. This resonance becomes profound as more and more compatibility of these wave frequencies are obtained and as more and more waves coalesce into one another. Gradually, the humming caused by these waves becomes greater and louder, and finally culminates into a cosmic sound known as 'Naad'. This Naad is the background sound of the cosmos and it itself is heard against the background of complete silence of the void of the cosmos, or nothingness of the universe<sup>1</sup>.

The emergence of this Naad marks the culmination of the 'Tapa' done by the heart (which is the epicentre of the Pran). This Naad, which is the vibrations produced by Pran or the vital wind force of life, is present in the heart. The vital wind which produces this Naad rises up into the head and is located in the 'Vyom Chakra' in the head. It finally escapes from the body by piercing through it (i.e., by either splitting the skull or through the nostrils)<sup>2</sup>. [The mind hears the Naad during meditation, and the hissing and rustling sound heard when breath passes through the nostrils are manifestations of this Naad. The sound vibration activates the 'Brahm Randhra Chakra' which in turn makes the aspirant experience the bliss of Brahm realisation. ] (21).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>A detailed analysis of this 'Naad' is presented in the author's Book titled 'OM and Naad' that has been published separately.

<sup>2</sup>The detailed process by which the various wind forces can be channelised and raised up along with the 'Pran' is described in detail in the Yog Chudamani Upanishad.]

स्वदेहस्य तु मूर्धनि ये प्राप्य परमां गतिम् । भूयस्ते न निवर्तन्ते परावरविदो जनाः ॥२२॥

svadehasya tu mūrdhānaṃ ye prāpya paramāṃ gatim /  
bhūyaste na nivartante parāvaravido janāḥ // 22 //

To be able to divert the 'Pran' (vital wind) to the top of the head and establish it in the subtle energy center located there (called the Vyom Chakra or the Brahm Randhra Chakra; see verse no. 21) is equivalent to obtaining the supreme stature of existence called 'Param Gati'. The wise and enlightened person who successfully achieves this stature finds liberation from the cycle of transmigration (birth and death). As noted in previous verse, this state is 'Brahm-realisation'. (22).

न साक्षिणं साक्ष्यधर्माः संस्पृशन्ति विलक्षणम् । अविकारमुदासीनं गृहधर्माः प्रदीपवत् ॥२३॥

na sākṣiṇaṃ sākṣyadharmāḥ saṃsprṣanti vilakṣaṇaṃ /  
avikāramudāsinaṃ gr̥hadharmāḥ pradīpavat // 23 //

A spiritual seeker or an aspirant for Brahm-realisation or self-realisation, who is without faults and blemishes of any kind and is detached from and dispassionate towards the deeds and the mundane world, remains as a mere witness to all that is happening around him without getting emotionally attached or involved in what he is observing, seeing or witnessing. This resembles the situation where a lighted lamp illuminates the house and enables the members to carry on with their activities in its light, but it is unaffected by either the members of the house or their activities and their results (23).

जले वापि स्थले वापि लुठत्वेष जडात्मकः । नाहं विलिप्ये तद्धर्मैर्घटधर्मैर्नभो यथा ॥२४॥

jale vāpi sthale vāpi luṭhatveṣa jaḍātmakaḥ /  
nāhaṃ vilipyē taddharmair-ghaṭadharmairnabho yathā // 24 //

Whether this gross body of mine remains lying in water or stays dry on ground, I —who is the pure consciousness represented by the ‘Pran’ residing in that body —am not at all affected by it even as the space or air inside a pitcher is not at all affected whether that pitcher is put inside the water or not<sup>1</sup> (24).

[Note :- <sup>1</sup>The water remains on the outside surface of the pitcher when it is put inside it; it does not wet its inner surface. Similarly, the vital wind called ‘Pran’ is separated from the external world by the ‘wall’ of the gross body of a creature. This body only acts as a membrane separating the Pran from its environs even as the body of a pitcher separates the air inside from the environment outside the pitcher. Just like the air in the pitcher can escape outside by two means— either through its opening at the top or by breaking the wall of the pitcher, the Pran too can also escape either by splitting of the skull or by the breath through the nostrils. This is what is meant in this verse.]

निष्क्रियोऽस्म्यविकारोऽस्मि निष्कलोऽस्मि निराकृतिः ।  
निर्विकल्पोऽस्मि नित्योऽस्मि निरालम्बोऽस्मि निर्द्वयः ॥२५॥  
सर्वात्मकोऽहं सर्वोऽहं सर्वातीतोऽहमद्वयः ।  
केवलाखण्डबोधोऽहं स्वानन्दोऽहं निरन्तरः ॥२६॥

niṣkriyo’smyavikāro’smi niṣkalo’smi nirākṛtiḥ /  
nirvikalpo’smi nityo’smi nirālambo’smi nirdvayaḥ // 25 //  
sarvātmako’haṃ sarvo’haṃ sarvātīto’hama-dvayaḥ /  
kevalākhaṇḍabodho’haṃ svānando’haṃ nirantaraḥ // 26 //

I, the pure conscious Atma, am inactive (i.e., I do not indulge in anything and simply remains a mute witness and spectator to all that is happening), am without any faults, blemishes, taints or defects, am spotless, untarnished, pure, immaculate and innocent, am without any form, shape or contours, am stable, steadfast, certain, immutable, constant and uniform, am eternal and infinite, am without any prop or support (i.e., I am self sustained and self supporting, complete in all respects and independent of all), am non-dual, am the soul of all creation, am beyond everything, and am singular and without a second.

I am an image of enlightenment and wisdom who is constantly and permanently in a state of supreme bliss and happiness, beatitude and felicity (25-26).

स्वमेव सर्वतः पश्यन्मन्यमानः स्वमद्वयम् । स्वानन्दमनुभुञ्जानो निर्विकल्पो भवाम्यहम् ॥२७॥

svameva sarvataḥ paśyanmanyamānaḥ svamadvayam /  
svānanda-manubhuñjāno nirvikalpo bhavāmyaham // 27 //

I constantly see nothing else but my pure and truthful self. I regard myself as a non-dual entity present everywhere. All that is visible is that non-dual entity, and that is 'me' whose true identity is the Atma, Brahm or pure consciousness. I enjoy myself and remain in a perpetual state of blissfulness and felicity. I am without a second. I am without any doubts, alternatives and options (i.e., my pure and truthful existence is pure consciousness which is enlightened and beyond any doubt or confusion). Verily, I am like that! (27).

[Note :- The pronoun 'I' refers to the Atma which is the true self and the truthful identity of the Sanyasi. The use of the word 'I' is not to be misinterpreted as a show of arrogance, ego or haughtiness on the part of the Sanyasi. It simply emphasises the point that he has realised his true nature and has overcome all delusions pertaining to his correct and truthful identity. With this realisation, he is filled with ecstasy and proclaims loudly that he has realised the truth about himself.]

गच्छंस्तिष्ठन्नुपविशञ्चयानो वाऽन्यथापि वा ।  
यथेच्छया वसेद्विद्वानात्मारामः सदा मुनिरित्युपनिषत् ॥२८॥

gacchamṣtiṣṭhannupaviśañchayāno vā'nyathāpi vā /  
yathecchayā vasedvid-vānātmārāmaḥ sadā munirityupaniṣat // 28 //

Always on the move, remaining at a place, sitting, sleeping or doing any work —that wise Atma in the body of a Sanyasi (sage/seer/ascetic/hermit) should be fully satisfied and contented with itself in any position in life.

The Sanyasi should spend his life according to his free will (after he has realised the truth). This is verily what this Upanishad says (28).

[Note :- The last sentence 'to live freely' is not a license for recklessness, and unbridled and indulgent living. It simply means that the various restrictions that have been laid out in the different scriptures for different classes of people and phases of life are meant to act as moral guidelines for a regulated and civilised way of life. Otherwise there would be utter chaos and anarchy in the society and people would become like savages. But for those who have an inborn sense of civility, probity, propriety, righteousness, commonsense, rational thinking, morality, ethos and decency, it does not matter whether or not they have studied in an university, or whether they have been taught civic sense or not in a college, they would nevertheless certainly not act like an uncivilised savage. So this analogy would explain this verse— for those who are wise and enlightened, for those who are sincere renunciates (as opposed to imposters and those who are forced to become a Sanyasi due to various reasons), for those who have Brahm realisation, living a free life would not change their attitude and perspective. Rather, it would give them freedom and space to live in peace with themselves without bothering about the formal niceties and etiquettes of the world. After all, 'freedom and peace' are tantamount to liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation, collectively called Moksha, from the fetters that tie a creature to this horrible world of formalities and bondages.]

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## ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

### Chapter 3: Sanyas Upanishads of the Shukla Yajur Veda

There are eight Upanishads belonging to the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition that deal with the concept of Sanyas. All of them are included in this Chapter, and are the following:

- 3.1 Jabalo-panishad (Canto 4-6)
- 3.2 Paramhanso-panishad
- 3.3 Subalo-panishad (Canto 12-13)
- 3.4 Niralambo-panishad
- 3.5 Bhikshuko-panishad
- 3.6 Turiyato-panishad
- 3.7 Yagyavalkya Upanishad
- 3.8 Shatyayani-panishad

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#### (3.1) Jabal Upanishad, Cantos 4—6:

##### Canto 4

[Cantos 4-6 of this Upanishad deal with the concept of 'Sanyas'. A similar discourse between sage Yagyavalkya and the erudite and enlightened king Janak appears in Yagyavalkya Upanishad which is Chapter 3.7 of this book]

॥ जाबालोपनिषद् ॥

॥ चतुर्थः खण्डः ॥

अथ ह जनको ह वैदेहो याज्ञवल्क्यमुपसमेत्योवाच भगवन् संन्यासमनुब्रूहीति । स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यो ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भवेत्, गृही भूत्वा वनी भवेत्, वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेत् । यदि वेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादिव

प्रब्रजेद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वा । अथ पुनरब्रती वा ब्रती वा स्नातको वाऽस्नातको वा उत्सन्नाग्निरनग्निको वा यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रब्रजेत् ॥१॥

### Jabalo Upanishad (Sukla yajurveda Upanishad), Canto 4

atha ha janako ha vaideho yājñavalkyamupasametyovāca bhagavan samnyāsamanubrūhīti / sa hovāca yājñavalkyo brahmacaryam samāpya grhī bhavet, grhī bhūtvā vanī bhavet, vanī bhūtvā pravrajat / yadi vetarathā brahmacaryādeva pravrajedgrhādvā vanādvā // atha punaravratī vā vratī vā snātako vā'snātako vā utsannāgniranagniko vā yadahareva virajettadahareva pravrajat // 1 //

1. Once the wise and enlightened king Janak, also known as Videha-Janak, went to sage Yagyavalkya and most politely asked him, 'Oh Lord! Please enlighten me on 'Sanyas' (which is a state of complete worldly renunciation)'. At his earnest request, Yagyavalkya preached him thus- 'A man should first follow the principles and a rigid life style of a 'Brahmachari' (when he lives a disciplined life observing austerity and self restraint under the tutelage of a learned and wise teacher and studies the scriptures, or in other words, acquires sufficient knowledge and skills that prepares him to face the world when he finally enters the householder's life). When that phase of life is successfully completed and fruitfully lived, one should enter the next phase called 'Grihastha-Ashram' (which means a householder's life when he marries, raises a family, creates wealth, establishes himself, and gains fame and a certain reputation). After this phase is over, one should enter the next phase called 'Vanprastha' which literally means heading for the forest. (In this phase, he hands over all his worldly responsibilities to his heir and goes on a pilgrimage or moves out of the house to live separately in a forest or some hermitage. This is a midway life between a householder's and that of complete renunciation when a person wanders as a mendicant or a monk or an ascetic who has completely broken all his links with his family, village, kith and kin and the world at large.)

When this phase has passed (and a man is sufficiently trained and prepared to face the rigors of the last and final phase), he should take to 'Sanyas', or a life marked by complete and final renunciation when a man should prepare himself for death and concentrate his attention on contemplation and meditation upon the Atma and the supreme, transcendental Brahman.

This is the usual course the life of a person should take; these are the steps sanctioned by the scriptures.

On the other hand, if true and sincere renunciation sprouts in the heart of a wise man early on in life, he needs not follow all the earlier phases of life; he can straight away take the vows of Sanyas. Whether he keeps religious fasts and observes sacraments or not, whether he is educated, learned and skilled or not, whether or not he has duly purified and prepared himself in a planned manner by accepting the vows of Sanyas in the front of a sacred fire (as witness) after the death of his wife, no matter what previous condition he was in, whenever his mind and heart become honestly, sincerely and truly detached from and dispassionate towards the alluring attractions offered by this materialistic world, whenever a man becomes disinterested in the sensory pleasures and comforts of this artificial and deluding world, it is sanctioned that he should or can accept the vows of Sanyas at that time.[1].



[Note—This verse clearly removes all formal traditional hurdles that might come in the way of a person who becomes enlightened early in life, such as is the case with great saints, sages, seers and ascetics who do not wish to waste their precious life and their precious moments in passing through the ‘proper channel’ consisting of four phases as laid down in the above verse. This step by step approach is also necessary because such enlightenment is a rarity, an exception rather than a norm. But in all former cases of early wisdom and renunciation, the operating requirement is truthfulness, honesty and sincerity. Dispassion and detachment should sprout voluntarily in the heart and mind, and it shouldn’t be a medium to hide frustration and failures of life. It should not be done under any compulsion of adverse circumstances or moved by emotions and delusions, because in these instances the man will certainly waver sooner or later and would end up being neither here or there. Worst, such pretensions and impostures might lead to his complete ruin.]

तद्धैके प्राजापत्यामेवेष्टिं कुर्वन्ति । तदु तथा न कुर्यादाग्नेयीमेव कुर्यात् । अग्निर्ह वै प्राणः ।  
प्राणमेवैतया करोति पश्चान्नैधातवीयामेव कुर्यात् । एतयैव त्रयो धातवो यदुत सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति ।  
अयं ते योनिर्ऋत्वियो यतो जातो अरोचथाः । तं जानन्नग्न आरोहाथा नो वर्धययिम् इत्यनेन  
मन्त्रेणाग्निमाजिघ्रेत् । एष ह वा अग्नेर्योनिर्यः प्राणः । प्राणं गच्छ स्वाहेत्येव मेवैतदाह ॥२॥

taddhaike prājāpatyāmeveṣṭiṃ kurvanti / tadu tathā na kuryādāgneyīmeva  
kuryāt / agnirha vai prāṇaḥ / prāṇamevaitayā karoti paścānraidhātavīyāmeva  
kuryāt / etayaiva trayo dhātavo yaduta sattvaṃ rajastama iti / ayaṃ te  
yonirṛtvijo yato jāto arocathāḥ / taṃ jānannagna ārohāthā no  
vardhayarayim / ityanena mantreṇāgnimājighret / eṣa ha vā agneryoniryaḥ  
prāṇaḥ / prāṇaṃ gaccha svāhetyeva mevaitadāha // 2 //

2. At the time of taking to the life of Sanyas, a formal initiation ceremony is held with the sacred fire as a witness. The aspirant should not do the sacrifice called ‘Prajapatya’ which some unwise people do; it is not meant for a Sanyasi. [This is because this particular ritual is done in honour of Prajapati Brahma, the creator and its guardian, who was responsible for symbolically opening the Pandora’s-box that this world is. A Sanyasi is endeavouring to move away from this illusionary world, and therefore there is no reason why he should worship and offer prayers to Prajapati who created this world of so many relationships and uncountable traps.]

Instead of it, he should offer prayers and oblations to the Fire God (because the fire is purifying, and it burns all the impurities that might be sticking to the soul due to any reason whatsoever, thereby bringing out its radiance and divinity to the fore). This is because the ‘fire element’ is Pran (literally the life in the form of vital wind present inside the body; the vitality and consciousness of the otherwise lifeless, gross and inane body)<sup>1</sup>. By worshipping, invoking and offering oblations to the Fire God, the Pran thrives; it becomes stronger, robust and more powerful.

After that, one should symbolically offer the three elements as a sacred offering to the sacred fire. The three qualities inherently present in all the creatures in small or great proportions are called Sat, Raj and Tam, and these are those fundamental elements that are offered to the fire here<sup>2</sup>.

When these three elements have been symbolically offered to the sacred fire, the aspirant Sanyasi should invoke the Fire God with the following prayer—‘Oh Fire!

This Pran of mine is the general cause of everything in this world, and it is in it that you have your origin. Oh Fire! You are the one who ‘burns’ the Pran moment by moment. [That is, by each passing moment, the life of a creature has burnt that much fuel and has come that much closure to death by that moment.] You are the authority which enables one to access light (of wisdom, erudition and enlightenment) and attain advancement in one’s spiritual endeavours. Bless me that I too progress in the path that leads to light (i.e. I too may reach the pinnacle of self realisation and enlightenment). Pran is the creator of fire; it is in the symbolic womb (container, receptacle and bosom) of Pran that the ‘fire element’ was born<sup>3</sup>.

Hence, oh Fire God, I request you to enter that Pran from where you have sprung forth (because that would be like your homecoming!). Since the Sanyasi is expected to have burnt all his ego and pride, vanquished all his desires and yearnings, therefore it is deemed that all his worldly passions have virtually vanished, and consequentially he has become serene, calm and tranquil. All his earlier restlessness and turbulence have ceased. Therefore, the ‘fire’ has no fear of being blown out if it comes roosting home in the Pran of the Sanyasi where the fire element had originally belonged! With these prayers and firm conviction, the Sanyasi<sup>4</sup> should make oblation to the sacred fire by saying the word ‘Swaha’. [This word is uttered at the time of offering oblations to the Gods during formal fire sacrifice rituals.] [2].

[Note---<sup>1</sup>*Fire* is a metaphor for energy, vitality, vigour, life, heat, stamina and strength. Breath is a form of Pran, and this is proved by the fact that (a) breath or expiration consists of warm air and (b) a man dies as soon as he stops breathing. Besides this, other forms of Pran or signs of life and senses in the body would freeze to death or become numb if there was no subtle and latent heat inside the body.

<sup>2</sup>The *Sanyasi* burns his ego and individuality when he takes to the path of Sanyas. These three qualities determine the individuality and personality of a man. When he gets rid of them, though symbolically, he becomes mentally neutral and full of equanimity. He virtually regains the ‘clean slate’ state that he had started out with in his journey of life. This removes all the hurdles in the path of his Atma/soul retrieving its primary pristine pure and uncorrupt form. Since the Atma is a microcosm of the all-pervading and almighty macrocosmic Soul of the cosmos called Brahm, the truly realised Sanyasi is deemed to be a living manifestation or an embodiment of Brahm as long as his Atma or soul lives in his body kept alive by the energy of the Pran. And upon death, emancipation and salvation is his! The three basic qualities inherent in a man which are being referred to here are—Sata, Raja and Tama .

The proportion of the three *Gunas* or qualities decides the nature, natural temperament, tendencies, habits and inclinations of the creature. For example, a person with a greater proportion of Satwic or Sata (noble and virtuous) characteristics will be considered nobler than a man with a greater proportion of either Raj or Tam qualities. So, we can say that sage, seers, ascetics, prophets, scholars are generally enlightened persons with a predominant high degree of Satwic quality. Kings and householders who live a good and noble life are examples of those with a predominance of Raja qualities alongside a good sprinkling of Sat qualities as compared to kings who are cruel and unjust, for in their case the lowest and meanest quality called Tama is more active and dominant factor than the other two. Sinners, such as killers, drunks, rowdy elements, cheats and other evil persons in the society are those with high concentration of Tama quality in them.

<sup>3</sup>This is because *Pran* is a synonym of the life sustaining vital air element, especially the wind that blows—as is evident by the constant flow of breath inside the body of a living being. Air and the oxygen present in it is a basic necessity for any fire to be kindled and kept alive. Hence metaphorically, the *Pran* is a receptacle that harbours ‘fire’; it activates it, sustains it and is also the cause of its extinction as is clear when the strong wind blows out the fiercest of fire.

The best proof of the inherent presence of fire in the wind/air element is the fact that exhaled breath is warm rather than being cool. We often experience ‘hot and scorching’ wind blowing during summers though we do not see any visible flame or other signs of the presence of fire in it. These two examples show that wind/air element has the fire element inherent to it; the latter is literally hidden in the bosom of the former.

<sup>4</sup>The life of a man is divided into four segments or *Ashrams* — (a) *Brahmacharya* —this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style, (b) *Grihastha* — when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the second phase called *Grihastha Ashram* which is a householder life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life and dealings with this deceptive world with all their accompanying horrifying problems, (c) *Vaanprastha* —this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) *Sanyas* —this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation and begging for food, and single mindedly aiming for emancipation and salvation.]

ग्रामादग्निमाहृत्य पूर्ववदग्निमाग्रापयेत् । यद्यग्निं न विन्देदप्सु जुहुयात् । आपौ वै सर्वा देवताः ।  
सर्वाभ्यो देवताभ्यो जुहोमि स्वाहेति हुत्वा समुद्धृत्य प्राश्नीयात्साज्यं हविरनामयं मोक्षमन्त्रस्त्रय्येवं विन्देत्  
। तद्ब्रह्मैतदुपासितव्यम् । एवमेवैतद्भगवन्निति वै याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥३॥

grāmādagnimāhṛtya pūrvavadagnimāghrāpayet // yadyagniṃ na vindedapsu  
juhuyāt / āpo vai sarvā devatāḥ / sarvābhyo devatābhyo juhomi svāheti hutvā  
samuddhṛtya prāśnīyātsājyaṃ haviranāmayam mokṣamantrastrayyevaṃ  
vindet / etadbrahmaitadupāsītavyam / evamevaitadbhagavanniti vai  
yājñavalkyaḥ // 3 //

3. For the purpose of this initiation rite, the sacred fire is to be brought from the house of any righteous household of the village (to which the person belongs). After the Mantras have been said (as described in verse no. 2) and the blessings of the Fire God

invoked, the aspirant Sanyasi should smell the fire. [This ‘smelling’ is a gesture to indicate that the aspirant’s entire being is soaked, infused and imbued with the divine blessings of the sacred fire; the fire is symbolically inhaled and it takes up residence in the body of the Sanyasi to protect him from within.]

In case fire is not available, oblations should be offered to the ‘water’ because the latter embodies all the divine forces of Nature represented by the different Gods; it personifies all the benevolent, magnanimous protecting, sustaining and nourishing virtues that the merciful Gods possess. The aspirant should be firmly convinced that he is offering homage to all the Gods simultaneously when he offers oblations to water. At the end of this initiation ritual, he should pick up the leftover offerings that have been previously mixed with Ghee (clarified butter) and respectfully eat the whole of it (as sanctified food).

Thus initiated Sanyasi should know that the divine Mantra which would give him final emancipation and provide salvation to his soul has three syllables or letters. [These are A, U and M forming the ethereal and eclectic word ‘OM’----]. It is an acronym for the supreme, transcendental Brahm, it is synonymous with Brahm, and it is worthy of being worshipped, honoured, revered and adored like Brahm. This is what Yagyavalkya expounded [3].

[Note---(1) The detailed process of taking to Sanyas and all other matters pertaining to this renunciate way of life have been elaborately described in Sanyaso-panishad of Sam Veda tradition amongst other Upanishads on this subject. (2) The detail process of preparing the offering, called Mantha, to be offered to the sacred fire has been described in Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad 6/3/13, and the relevant Mantras in 6/3/1-12 of the same Upanishad. This particular Upanishad belongs to the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.]

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## Canto 5

॥ पञ्चमः खण्डः ॥

अथ हैनमत्रिः पप्रच्छ याज्ञवल्क्यम् । पृच्छामि त्वा याज्ञवल्क्य अयज्ञोपवीती कथं ब्राह्मण इति । स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्य इदमेवास्य तद्यज्ञोपवीतं य आत्मा अपः प्राश्याचम्यायं विधिः परिव्राजकानाम् ॥१॥

atha hainamatriḥ papraccha yājñavalkyam / prcchāmi tvā yājñavalkya  
ayajñopavīti katham brāhmaṇa iti / sa hovāca yājñavalky idamevāsyā  
tadyajñopavītam ya ātmā apaḥ prāśyācamyāyaṁ vidhiḥ parivrājakānām // 1  
//

1. Next, sage Atri asked sage Yagyavalkya, ‘I wish to know how a person who does not wear the ‘sacred thread’ called Yagyopavit can be ascribed with the honourable title of a Brahmin?’ Yagyavalkya replied, ‘For him, his Atma, his soul, his pure consciousness, his true ‘self’, is the symbolic sacred thread. For such wise and

enlightened renunciates, it is prescribed that they should purify themselves at the time of any religious rite or observing any sacrament or offering any prayer by using simple water for the purpose. It should be sipped by him three times. For Sanyasis called 'Parivarjak', this is the prescribed method [1].

[Note---This fact has been clearly stated in Sanyaso-panishad, canto 2, verse no. 8,52,119 and 123 of Sam Veda tradition, and Paramhanso-panishad, verse no. 2 of Shukla Yajur Veda. Normally a Brahmin is supposed to wear the sacred thread as a distinguishing holy mark throughout his life as a symbol of his superior status in society as a wise representative of Brahm. This is as long as the world has any relevance for him. After all, the sacred thread consists of a gross perishable material thing originating in earth; it is never as high and exalted, as sublime and imperishable as the Atma having its origin in Brahm. When a person desires sincerely to take to Sanyas, it is natural that he has realised the perishable nature of things of this world and the eternal nature of his Atma. He wishes to find liberation from the fetters that shackle ordinary mortals to this entrapping materialistic world, find deliverance from it, and obtain the ultimate emancipation and salvation by finding the original source of his Atma, the Brahm, and thereby finding complete and final rest there. With this target in mind, all symbols become impediments for him; they are like small stones or pebbles lying on his path which cause annoyance to him by creating unnecessary spiritual hurdles and avoidable formalities which act like a drag and stumbling blocks for him. So he better get rid of them. The answer to the question 'who is a Brahmin' has been elaborately and exhaustibly described in Vajrasuchiko-panishad of the Sam Veda tradition.]

वीराध्वाने वाऽनाशके वाऽपां प्रवेशे वाऽग्निप्रवेशे वा महाप्रस्थाने वाऽथ परिव्राड्विवर्णवासा  
मुण्डोऽपरिग्रहः शुचिरद्रोही भैक्षणो ब्रह्मभूयाय भवति । यद्यातुरः स्यान्मनसा वाचा संन्यसेत् । एष  
पन्था ब्रह्मणा हानुवित्तस्तेनैति संन्यासी ब्रह्मविदित्येवमेवैष भगवन्निति वै याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥२॥

vīrādhvāne vā'nāśake vā'pām praveśe vā'gnipraveśe vā mahāprasthāne vā'tha  
parivrāḍvivarṇavāsā muṇḍo'parigrahaḥ śuciradrohī bhaikṣāṇo brahmabhūyāya  
bhavati / yadyāturaḥ syānmanasā vācā saṁnyaset / eṣa panthā brahmaṇā  
hānuvittastenaiti saṁnyāsī brahmavidityevamevaiṣa bhagavanniti vai  
yājñavalkyaḥ // 2 //

2. [This verse briefly describes the life of a Sanyasi.] While on his path (i.e. while he is roaming as an itinerant monk or friar), while fasting, while entering a water body (e.g. taking a dip in a river), while entering a fire (i.e. while burning oneself voluntarily as the ultimate sacrificial offering), and while embarking on the final departure as the last leg of his journey in this mortal world (i.e. at the time of death), the following rules are prescribed for a Sanyasi—He should wear ochre/orange coloured over garment (usually a loose cloak or simply a seamless piece of body wrapping sheet), tonsure his head clean, not ask for, expect and accept anything except basic food needed for survival and even that as begged alms, remain mentally and bodily uncorrupt and unpolluted, have no ill-will, animosity, malice and hatred towards anybody, and survive for the overall good and welfare of the society and the people at large by stringently following the vows of Sanyas, especially the vows of

begging (which automatically implies that he does not possess any worldly things, has conquered his ego and pride, and has become humble to the core).

If a man is very eager for Sanyas, then he should abandon all forms of attachments and attractions for worldly objects of comfort and pleasure, both by his mind as well as by his speech. [That is, he should neither ever think of them nor speak of them.] This wise path of enlightenment has been proclaimed by the Vedas. This is why it is the most appropriate path for a Sanyasi to follow, because he is deemed to be enlightened about the supreme Truth known as Brahm. This is how sage Yagyavalkya expressed his well considered views on the subject [2].

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## Canto 6

॥ षष्ठः खण्डः ॥

तत्र परमहंसा नाम संवर्तकारुणिश्चेतकेतुर्वासऋभुनिदाघजडभरतदत्तात्रेयरैवतकप्रभृतयोऽव्यक्तलिङ्गा  
अव्यक्ताचारा अनुमत्ता उन्मत्तवदाचरन्तः ॥१॥

tatra paramahamsā nāma samvartakāruṇiśvetaketudurvāsarḥbhunidāghajaḍa-  
bharatadattātreyaivaivatakaprabhṛtayo'vyaktaliṅgā avyaktācārā anumattā  
unmattavadācaranta // 1 //

1. The following great sages did not sport external signs or symbols of Sanyas though they were deemed to be prominent Sanyasis:--Samvartak, Aruni, Shwetketu, Durbasa, Ribhu, Nidagh, Jadbharat, Dattaatreya and Raivtak etc. They were called 'Paramhans' (which literally means those who follow the best path and observe the best principles of Sanyas, thereby becoming superior to their peers and wiser amongst them. They become as pure and wise as the Swan, a bird reputed to possess these eclectic and grand virtues). Their external behaviour was also mysterious (in the sense that they often displayed no behavioral indication of their being a Sanyasi, while internally they were truly renunciates of the highest order. They often appeared overly haughty, arrogant, furious, wild, extravagant and intoxicated with pride and ego of being erudite, learned and wise as well as possessing mystical powers and spiritual strength. But nevertheless they did not have any of these negative traits in them as their basic and inherent nature and temperament. [That is, internally they were at peace with themselves, were complete and true renunciates, were self-realised and enlightened, but more often than not their behaviour belied their exalted state. A typical example is sage Durbasa who has been depicted as being exceedingly arrogant, vehement and wrathful, getting annoyed at the slightest pretext and cursing without reservations, a behaviour that is unbecoming of a great saint or sage of an exalted stature.] (1).

त्रिदण्डं कमण्डलुं शिख्यं पात्रं जलपवित्रं शिखां यज्ञोपवीतं चेत्येतत्सर्वं भूः स्वाहेत्यप्सु  
परित्यज्यात्मानमन्विच्छेत् ॥२॥

tridaṇḍaṃ kamaṇḍaluṃ śikhyāṃ pātraṃ jalapavitraṃ śikhāṃ yajñopavītaṃ  
cetyetatsarvaṃ bhūḥ svāhetyapsu parityajyātmānamanvicchet // 2 //

2. A wise, enlightened, self-realised and exalted Sanyasi should discard all external symbols of Sanyas—such as the trident or the staff, the water-pot, the latticed sling bag, the ‘pavitra’ which is a brush of grass used to sprinkle water for purification rite, the tuft of hair on the head, and the sacred thread etc. These should be dispersed in the water of a river or any other large water body by saying ‘Swaha’ (or ‘I am offering all these symbols as offering to water because the latter is an embodiment of all the Gods’; see section 4, verse no. 3 also).

Once rid of these symbols, a Sanyasi should focus his attention on his Atma (the pure self, the pure consciousness, the soul, the supreme Brahman in a microcosmic form). He should spend his time meditating upon the Atma, and contemplating upon the ultimate Truth and Reality of this world. (See also Sanyaso-panishad, 2/8 in this context.) (2)

[Note—The staff, called a Danda, is an important insignia of a Sanyasi. The ‘Tridanda’ basically means three staffs or sticks tied together, each made up of bamboo. The word ‘Danda’ stands for self control, and therefore these three staffs stand for a combined control of the mind, called the Mana Danda, control over the speech, called the Vaak Danda, and control over the body, called Kaya Danda.]

यथाजातरूपधरो निर्द्वन्द्वो निष्परिग्रहस्तत्तत्त्वब्रह्ममार्गे सम्यक्संपन्नः शुद्धमानसः प्राणसंधारणार्थं यथोक्तकाले  
विमुक्तो भैक्षमाचरन्नुदरपात्रेण लाभालाभौ समौ भूत्वा शून्यागारदेवगृहतृणकूटवल्मीकवृक्षमूल—  
कुलालशालाग्निहोत्रशालानदीपुलिन गिरिकुहरकन्दरकोटरनिर्झरस्थण्डिलेष्वनिकेतवास्यप्रयत्नो निर्ममः  
शुक्लध्यानपरायणोऽध्यात्मनिष्ठः शुभाशुभकर्मनिर्मूलनपरः संन्यासेन देहत्यागं करोति स परमहंसो नाम  
स परमहंसो नामेति ॥३॥

॥ इति जाबालोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

yathājātarūpadharo nirdvandvo niṣparigrahastattattvadbrahmanmārgē  
samyaksaṃpannaḥ śuddhamānaśaḥ prāṇasandhāraṇārthaṃ yathoktakāle  
vimukto bhaikṣamācarannudarapātreṇa lābhālābhau samau bhūtvā  
śūnyāgāradevagr̥hatṛṇakūṭavalmīkavṛkṣamūlakulālaśālāgnihotraśālānādī-  
pulina girikuharakandarakoṭṭaranirjharasthaṇḍileṣvaniketavāsyaprayatno  
nirmamaḥ śukladhyānaparāyaṇo’dhyātmaniṣṭhaḥ śubhāśubhakarmānirmūla-  
naparaḥ saṃnyāseṇa dehatyāgaṃ karoti sa paramahaṃso nāma  
paramahaṃso  
nāmeti // 3 //

// thus ends Jabal Upanishad //

3. [This verse describes the characters and virtues of a Sanyasi.] A Sanyasi should follow the code of conduct and ethics consonant with and conducive to a renunciate way of life. He should not have any restlessness, agitations, doubts and confusions in his mind and heart. He should be free from all desires and cravings, and instead be steadily contented. He should not expect anything nor keep anything as a possession with him. He should be a steady pilgrim on the path of Brahm (truth) realisation with a pure and uncorrupt heart and mind. To bear his Pran (life) in his body as long as the appropriate time for its departure does not arrive, he begs for food, though for all practical purposes he is deemed to be liberated from all shackles, included that of the gross body. [That is, though his Atma is freed from the fetters of ignorance that tie down a man to this body which he erroneously treats as his true self, he still eats sufficiently enough to sustain the basic needs of the body because it harbours his Atma, albeit temporarily.] He eats not for taste or pampering his hunger for delectable food, but literally dumps the food in the 'pot' of his belly. [This shows that he keeps his Atma aloof from the temptations of a tasty food.]

He is not worried either about gains or losses, i.e. he treats them equally with equanimity. He stays in a secluded and serene place, a temple or any place of worship, near bushes and alcoves or any other place where there is grass (so that he can lie down on it), near the hole of a snake, an ant hill, the root of a tree (i.e. in its shade), a potter's household, a place where a fire sacrifice is held, and the banks of a clean river, on a mountain or in one of its caves or valleys, in a pit or a natural abyss, near a waterfall or any other place which is deemed to be free from any worldly allurements and temptations, such as any chance of offering any comfort and pleasure to the body and its organs.

He should never think of his earlier home and enjoyments of life, and remain free from all encumbrances of worldly attachments and attractions. That is, he should be dispassionate towards and detached from everything concerned with the world as well as his body. He remains always contemplative, meditating upon the glorious, radiant and pure Atma. This effort helps him to cleanse himself from all the ills of good or bad deeds that cling to him due to his past (previous) life.

A Sanyasi who discards this body (i.e. dies) after having diligently lived in a righteous way and according to prescribed norms for a life of renunciation and detachment, is indeed called a 'Paramhans' (3).

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### (3.2) Param-Hans Upanishad:

This Upanishad has only four Mantras or verses in which the celestial sage Narad asks Lord Vishnu about the characteristic features, signs and norms of a type of Sanyasi (renunciate ascetic, an itinerant monk, friar or hermit) known as 'Paramhans'. This Upanishad should be read along with other Upanishads on this subject of Sanyas.

॥ परमहंसोपनिषद् ॥



अथ योगिनां परमहंसानां कोऽयं मार्गस्तेषां का स्थितिरिति नारदो भगवन्तमुपगत्योवाच । तं भगवानाह । योऽयं परमहंसमार्गो लोके दुर्लभतरो न तु बाहुल्यो यद्येको भवति स एव नित्यपूतस्थः स एव वेदपुरुष इति विदुषो मन्यन्ते महापुरुषो यच्चित्तं सत्सर्वदा मय्येवावतिष्ठते तस्मादहं च तस्मिन्नेवावस्थीयते । असौ स्वपुत्रमित्रकलत्रबन्धादीञ्छिखायज्ञोपवीतं स्वाध्यायं च सर्वकर्माणि संन्यस्यायं ब्रह्माण्डं च हित्वा कोपीनं दण्डमाच्छादनं च स्वशरीरोपभोगार्थाय च लोकस्योपकारार्थाय च परिग्रहेत् । तच्च न मुख्योऽस्ति कोऽयं मुख्य इति चेदयं मुख्यः ॥१॥

atha yogināṃ paramahaṃsānāṃ ko'yaṃ mārgasteṣāṃ kā sthīriti nārado bhagavantamupagatyovāca / taṃ bhagavānāha / yo'yaṃ paramahaṃsamārgo loka durlabhataro na tu bāhulyo yadyeko bhavati sa eva nityapūtaṣṭhaḥ sa eva vedapuruṣa iti viduṣo manyante mahāpuruṣo yaccittaṃ tatsarvadā mayyevāvaṭiṣṭhate tasmādaham ca tasminnevāvasthīyate / asau svaputra-mitrakalatrabandhvādīñchśikhāyajñopavītaṃ svādhyāyaṃ ca sarvakarmāṇi samnyasyāyaṃ brahmāṇḍaṃ ca hitvā kaupīnaṃ daṇḍamācchādanaṃ ca svaśārīropabhogārthāya ca lokasyopakārārthāya ca parigrahet tacca na mukhyo'sti ko'yaṃ mukhya iti cedayaṃ mukhyaḥ // 1 //

1. Once upon a time, the celestial sage Narad went to Lord Vishnu and asked him, 'Oh Lord! Amongst renunciate ascetics, what is the condition and characteristic features of a 'Paramhans', and what path do they follow (i.e. what rules do they observe, whom do they worship, what is their routine life etc.)?'

Hearing this, the Lord replied, 'The path followed by a Paramhans Sanyasi is very difficult and rare in this world. Such people who follow this path honestly and diligently are also very rare. Only a few people can become a true Paramhans Sanyasi. They remain perpetually engrossed in the most holy, pious and divine state of mental bearing. Such Paramhans Sanyasis are an embodiment of the Vedas; they represent what the Vedas preach and they exemplify their tenets in practical life—this is the belief of those who are wise, expert, erudite and well versed in this subject.

The mind and intellect of such persons are ever engrossed and focused on me (Lord Vishnu, the sustainer of the creation and the Viraat Purush who is the Lord from whom even Brahma, the creator of the visible world and the Vedas, is said to have emerged). I too am firmly established in their bosom.

A Paramhans Sanyasi forsakes all ties with his worldly relatives such as his kith and kin, his son and wife, his friends and brothers etc. He even discards his links with all such external signs of Sanyas such as keeping a tuft of hair on the top of the head (cranium), the sacred thread, the studying of the scriptures, and all other traditional formalities, observances of different sacraments and rituals that are associated with a religious way of life. He bears his life or body for the welfare of the world at large. He wears just enough clothes to sustain that body, i.e. he just covers his body to maintain decorum and to protect it from the vagaries of Nature—e.g. he wears only a loin cloth and a sheet to cover his body with. He carries only a ascetic's staff called the 'Danda'. [This Danda is like a scepter held by a king; it is a symbol of his spiritual kingship and distinguishes him from the rest of the people; it is his symbol of moral and spiritual authority.]

But actually and frankly speaking, even these are not the correct and truthful symbols or signs of a 'true' Paramhans Sanyasi.'

Surprised, Narad asked, ‘Then oh Lord, what are those signs or symbols?’ (1).

[Note—The word *Paramhans* has two parts—viz. ‘Param’ which means the best, the most exalted, the superior one, the exemplary character or the grand eclectic virtues exhibited by a person, while the second word ‘Hans’ refers to the bird Swan which is considered as the wisest amongst the birds because of its reputation of picking the best of all available. Refer also to Hansa Upanishad. Therefore, a Paramhans Sanyasi is one who is the best amongst all categories of renunciate ascetics or hermits. He is deemed to have graduated from being a simple renunciate into an enlightened and self-realised person for whom all formalities and formal forms of worship and signs that are used as a constant reminder for the aspirant that he belongs to a particular school of thought and philosophy, that he is supposed to adhere to his sanctioned code of conduct and behaviour, that he is supposed to diligently avoid doing anything that is not befitting of his exalted stature, that he has taken certain exemplary religious vows and he should be careful about them lest he would fall from his chosen path of spiritualism, and that the world would look up to him for an example and so he should be very careful about what he does, says and how he behaves—are not needed and not necessary. In fact he has even gone beyond any worldly yardsticks for measuring his enlightenment, mystical abilities, or of the degree of holiness, purity and sincerity as a spiritually exalted soul.]

न दण्डं न शिखां न यज्ञोपवीतं न चाच्छादनं चरति परमहंसो न शीतं न चोष्णं न सुखं न दुःखं न मानावमाने च षडूर्मिवर्जं निन्दागर्वमत्सरदम्भदर्पेच्छाद्वेषसुखदुःखकामक्रोधलोभमोहहर्षासूयाहंकारादींश्च हित्वा स्ववपुः कुणपमिव दृश्यते यतस्तद्वपुरपध्वस्तं संशयविपरीतमिथ्याज्ञानानां यो हेतुस्तेन नित्यनिवृत्तस्तन्नित्यबोधस्तत्स्वयमेवावस्थितिस्तं शान्तमचलमद्वयानन्दचिद्घन एवास्मि । तदेव मम परमधाम तदेव शिखा च तदेवोपवीतं च । परमात्मात्मनोरेकत्वज्ञानेन तयोर्भेद एव विभग्नः सा संख्या ॥२॥

na daṇḍaṃ na śikhāṃ na yajñopavītaṃ na cācchādanaṃ carati paramahaṃso  
na śītaṃ na coṣṇaṃ na sukhaṃ na duḥkhaṃ na mānāvamāne ca ṣaḍūrmivarjaṃ  
nindāgarvamatsaradambhadarpecchādvēṣasukhaduḥkhakāmakrodha-  
lobhamohaharṣāsūyāhaṃkāradīṃśca hitvā svavapuḥ kuṇapamiva dr̥ṣyate  
yatastadvapurapadhvastaṃ saṃśayaviparītamithyājñānānāṃ yo hetustena  
nityanivṛttastannityabodhastatsvayamevāvasthitistaṃ śāntamacalama-  
dvayānandacidghana evāsmi / tadeva mama paramadhāma tadeva śikhā ca  
tadevopavītaṃ ca / paramātmātmanorekatvajñānena tayorbheda eva  
vibhagnaḥ sā saṃdhyā // 2 //

2. The main rules and codes of conduct that are mandated for a Paramhans Sanyasi and expected to be adhered by him are the following—He should not hold (carry) a staff (Danda) nor wear a tuft of hair on the head (called the Shikha); he should not wear the sacred thread or any covering on the body. He should be free from such notions as having the perception of cold and heat, of insult and honour, of happiness and joys as well as sufferings and miseries. [That is, he should treat all circumstances with stoic equanimity and fortitude, remaining absolutely unruffled, calm and poised; he should not be upset or become restless even during great emotional upheavals.]

He abandons all the following traits—‘Ninda’ or finding faults with others and criticizing them; ‘Garva’ or having any kind of false ego, pride and arrogance; ‘Matsarya’ or having envy, jealousy, ill-will and malice towards others; ‘Darpa’ or having self praise, pretensions of greatness and self glorification; ‘Ichha’ or having

desires, expectations, interests, wants etc.; ‘Dwesh’ or having enmity, hatred, aversion, animosity, resentment, rancour, spite and malice; ‘Sukh’ or the notion of happiness, joys, comfort and pleasure; ‘Dukh’ or the opposite notions of Sukh, i.e. the perception of sorrows, anguish, grief, sufferings, miseries, agonies and pains; ‘Kaam’ or worldly passions, desires, lust, yearning for sensual gratification etc.; ‘Krodh’ or vengeance, anger, wrathfulness, being susceptible to short temper; ‘Lobh’ or greed, avarice, yearnings and rapacity; ‘Moha’ or having attachments and affections, being enamoured and infatuated, having delusions and ignorance; ‘Harsh’ or having the feeling of exhilaration, ecstasy, excessive joy, exultation, gladness, gratefulness; ‘Asuya’ or pricking holes with others, having jealousy and envy; ‘Ahankar’ or having pride, ego, arrogance, hypocrisy, haughtiness; and all other such negative traits.

He treats his body as being good as dead. All his doubts and confusions as well as falsehoods and illusions are dispelled. He is an embodiment of eternal enlightenment and is a self-realised person who expects nothing from this world. He is firmly convinced that his true identity or his true self (which is his Atma) is a stable, constant, infinite and eternal entity; it is matchless in its bliss and felicity; it is pure consciousness personified.

He believes that this firm faith in his ‘true self’ is akin to being established in the supreme abode of Brahm. That is, he is convinced that this realisation about the eternal, imperishable, pure and divine nature of the conscious and enlightened Atma, which is his true ‘self’, makes him fearless from being uprooted from a temporary residence or abode and becoming a homeless vagabond. He feels that he has his Atma as his permanent residence. He believes that since the Atma is his truthful identity, and since the Atma is eternal and imperishable, he too has these grand qualities. [In other words, the realisation that he is not the gross perishable body but the sublime imperishable Atma, that this Atma is where the supreme Brahm resides, and that this Atma is a microcosm of the cosmic Consciousness that prevails uniformly everywhere in the world, instills a sense of fearlessness of becoming homeless if the body dies, or when he has left his walled household behind. For now onwards, the entire world becomes his home.]

He also believes that this firm faith is also like the symbolic tuft of hair on the head (on the cranium) and the sacred thread across his shoulders (which are external symbols or insignia to remind him that he belongs to the group of wise and elderly people who are supposed to be awakened and self-realised, and which are regarded as the quintessential marks of a man of high birth).

He treats the Atma and the Parmatma (i.e. the individual soul at the microcosmic level and the supreme transcendental Soul of the creation at the macrocosmic level) as being synonymous with each other. That is, he firmly believes in the concept of ‘non-duality’. For him, there is no distinction between the two. This erudition and eclectic knowledge is the symbolic sacrament called ‘Sandhya’ as far as he is concerned.

[Sandhya is a ritual of prayer offered to the Gods three times a day when two time zones meet, e.g. at dawn when the night meets the day, at noon when the sun is at its zenith, and at dusk which is the meeting point of the day and the night. Since he believes in non-duality, there is no difference for him between the day and the night, or between the pre-noon hours and the post-noon hours. In other words, he can offer prayers to the God at all times of the day and night; in fact he is expected to remain constantly and perpetually in a meditative state of being focused on his chosen deity.] (2).

सर्वान्कामान्परित्यज्य अद्वैते परमे स्थितिः । ज्ञानदण्डो धृतो येन एकदण्डी स उच्यते । काष्ठदण्डो धृतो येन सर्वाशी ज्ञानवर्जितः । तितिक्षाज्ञानवैराग्यशमादिगुणवर्जितः । भिक्षामात्रेण यो जीवेत्स पापी यतिवृत्तिहा । स याति नरकान्घोरान्महारौरवसंज्ञकान् । इदमन्तरं ज्ञात्वा स परमहंसः ॥३॥

sarvāṅkāmaṅparityajya advaite parame sthitiḥ / jñānadaṇḍo dhr̥to yena ekadaṇḍī sa ucyate / kāṣṭhadaṇḍo dhr̥to yena sarvāśī jñānavarjitaḥ / titikṣājñānavairāgyaśamādiguṇavarjitaḥ / bhikṣāmātreṇa yo jīvetṣa pāpī yativr̥ttihā / sa yāti narakāṅghorāṇmahārauravasamjñakān // idamantaram jñātvā sa paramahaṁsaḥ // 3 //

3. He forsakes all forms of desires, hopes and expectations, and remains ever engrossed in the thoughts of the non-dual supreme transcendental Brahm. He is also known as 'Ek Dandī', i.e. one who carries only one staff. This is a symbolic way of asserting that he relies upon only one support, and that is 'Gyan', or truthful knowledge of the ultimate reality which is achieved by wisdom, erudition and enlightenment. This Gyan makes him firmly established in the rock solid truth about his real self, and it is his Atma which is Brahm personified.

On the other hand, a person who holds an external wooden staff or scepter as a symbol of his exalted stature as a Sanyasi in society, but remains mentally attached to the world, being internally engrossed or submerged in its thoughts or having any kind of worldly hopes, desires and expectations, is ignorant of the 'truth'. He is devoid of such eclectic and glorious virtues as true renunciation, contentedness, truthful knowledge, dispassion, detachment, tolerance, fortitude, forbearance etc. which are the hallmarks of a Sanyasi. Such a man just maintains a false façade of being a Sanyasi; he is being deceitful and is an impostor. He has undermined and destroyed the august institution of Sanyas. Such a person goes to the lowest form of hell known as 'Raurav'. Those who understand this difference between a real Sanyasi and an impostor who acts as a Sanyasi but is isn't are verily true 'Paramhans' (i.e. they are like a wise Swan which has the unique ability to pick and choose what is auspicious and good, and discard what is not). [In other words, a person who understands that external signs or symbols or insignia can cheat the world but not the self is a really realised one. For him, there is therefore no need for wearing the tuft of hair, a sacred thread or holding the staff. What he endeavours is to inculcate the grand, eclectic and holy qualities mentioned above in this verse, such as conquering Ninda, Garva, Matsarya, Darpa etc. Such conquest would indeed be beneficial for his spiritual progress.] (3).

आशाम्बरो न नमस्कारो न स्वाहाकारो न स्वधाकारो न निन्दा न स्तुतिर्यादृच्छिको भवेद्भिक्षुः । नावाहनं न विसर्जनं न मन्त्रं न ध्यानं नोपासनं च । न लक्ष्यं नालक्ष्यं न पृथङ् नापृथगहं न न त्वं न सर्वं चानिकेतस्थिरमतिरेव स भिक्षुः सौवर्णादीनां नैव परिग्रहेन्न लोकनं नावलोकनं च न च बाधकः क इति चेद्बाधकोऽस्त्येव । यस्माद्भिक्षुर्हिरण्यं रसेन दृष्टं चेत्स ब्रह्महा भवेद्यस्माद्भिक्षुर्हिरण्यं रसेन स्पृष्टं चेत्स पौल्कसो भवेद्यस्माद्भिक्षुर्हिरण्यं रसेन ग्राह्यं चेत्स आत्महा भवेत्तस्माद्भिक्षुर्हिरण्यं रसेन न दृष्टं च न स्पृष्टं च न ग्राह्यं च । सर्वे कामा मनोगता व्यावर्तन्ते । दुःखे नोद्विग्नः सुखे न स्पृहा त्यागो रागे सर्वत्र शुभाशुभयोरनभिस्नेहो न द्वेष्टि न मोदं च । सर्वेषामिन्द्रियाणां गतिरुपरमते य आत्मन्येवावस्थीयते । तत्पूर्णानन्दैकबोधस्तद्ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीति कृतकृत्यो भवति कृतकृत्यो भवति ॥४॥

॥ इति परमहंसोपनिषद् ॥

āśāmbaro na namaskāro na svāhākāro na svadhākāro na nindā na stutiryādr̥cchiko bhavedbhikṣuḥ / nāvāhanam na visarjanam na mantram na dhyānam nopāsanam ca / na lakṣyam nālakṣyam na pṛthan nāpṛthagaham na na tvam na sarvam cāniketasthiramatiरेva sa bhikṣuḥ sauvarṇādīnām naiva parigrahenna lokanam nāvalokanam ca na ca bādhakaḥ ka iti cedbādhako'styeva yasmādbhikṣurhiraṇyam rasena dr̥ṣṭam cetsa brahmā bhavedyasmādbhikṣurhiraṇyam rasena spr̥ṣṭam cetsa paulkaso bhavedyasmādbhikṣurhiraṇyam rasena grāhyam cetsa ātmahā bhavettasmādbhikṣurhiraṇyam rasena na dr̥ṣṭam ca na spr̥ṣṭam ca na grāhyam ca / sarve kāmā manogatā vyāvartante / duḥkhe nodvignaḥ sukhe na spr̥hā tyāgo rāge sarvatra śubhāśubhayoranabhisneho na dveṣṭi na modaṃ ca / sarveśāmindriyāṇām gaturuparamate ya ātmanyevāvasthīyate / tatpūrṇānandaikabodha-stadbrahmaivāhamasmīti kṛtakṛtyo bhavati kṛtakṛtyo bhavati // 4 //

// thus ends Param Hans Upanishad //

4. He remains free from all expectations of honour and respect as long as he is alive, such as expectation of anyone bowing before him, or anyone offering him gifts or even food to eat. He does not expect anyone honouring and remembering and paying homage to him after his death. He does not pay any heed to being criticised, and remains emotionally calm and unexcited even upon being praised and honoured. He has highest degree of equanimity and forbearance. He remains an itinerant friar or a wandering ascetic or roaming monk willingly and voluntarily throughout the rest of his life (and not forced to do so due to adverse circumstances).

For him there are no traditional rules to be rigidly followed, such as invocation of Gods and offering prayers and oblations to them, dispersing of the invited Gods at the end of a religious ritual or ceremony, chanting or repetition of Mantras, contemplation and meditation, or worship and adoration of any deity. In fact, he has no aim in life and no fear from any quarter; he is under no obligation of any God or any religious sect or dispensation. [This is because he has realised Brahm as his own true self in the form of his Atma, who is the supreme deity. Therefore, he need not worship anyone else.]

Since he believes in 'non-duality', there is no notion of anything being separate or distinct from any other thing; there is no such idea/concept as mine and yours. He is completely neutral and dispassionate, and therefore it does not matter to him whether anything is universal or not, whether it is uniform or not. [That is, he has no emotions and notions at all; he does not bother or thinks about anything at all; it does not matter to him whether two given entities are different or same; whether anything belongs to you or me. He is equanimity, fortitude, dispassion and indifference personified.]

He has no permanent residence (because he is always on the move), yet he has a stable mind and intellect which do not wander around aimlessly. [That is, his residence is not fixed at one place, but his mind is fixed.] He does not endeavour to accumulate gold and other material things of this world. No object of this world

appears too attractive for him, and neither do they look repulsive to him. So, what can hinder his way; what can stop him? A Paramhans mendicant who yearns for gold (or any material wealth of this world) is deemed to have committed a grave sin which is equivalent to killing a Brahmin. He is no better than a Chandala (a low outcaste person who performs the last rites of dead bodies in the cremation ground and stays away from villages and population areas). Hence, a mendicant Paramhans should neither see, touch or accept gold from any source. All such desires of a true Paramhans are automatically destroyed and annihilated. Therefore, he is fully fulfilled and contented.

He does not become agitated or restless during sorrows and bad times, and neither does he get excited and thrilled during happy and favourable times. He abandons all forms of 'Raag' or the sense of attachment, longing, infatuation, affection and endearments towards all. He treats both auspicious and inauspicious circumstances with exemplary equanimity and fortitude. He keeps no hatred, ill-will, malice, animosity and rancour towards anyone, nor does he feel endeared to them, or has any emotional attachment with anything or anybody. He does not feel happy and joyous, nor does he feel otherwise.

All his sense organs have become calmed down; they have lost their inherent restless and fidgety nature. He remains ever engrossed in contemplation and meditation upon his eternal Atma which is his essential self. He regards himself as full of pure bliss and happiness; he treats himself as a fount of beatitude and felicity. He regards himself as an embodiment of enlightenment and wisdom; as an embodiment of the supreme transcendental Brahman.

With this firm conviction and faith, he becomes grateful, obliged, fulfilled, contented and accomplished in a wholesome way (4).

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### (3.3) Subal Upanishad (Canto 12—13):

Propounded by sage Subal (pronounced as 'Su-baal'), and hence bearing his name, this Upanishad covers a wide swathe of Upanishadic philosophy in a very succinct manner. It has in all 16 cantos and basically expounds on the supremacy of the Atma over anything else in this creation. It describes magnificently the various characteristics of the Atma, its relevance and importance.

This Upanishad enunciates a philosophy that establishes a synergy between the grossest aspect of creation and its subtlest components, between the microcosm and the macrocosm represented by the individual creature and the one single Supreme Being, called Brahman, respectively. Here, intellectual deliberation is done to seek wisdom called Gyan. This cultivates inner enlightenment which is the realisation of the 'lighted, divine self', the Atma or soul, which is pure consciousness. This Upanishad facilitates understanding of the unique 'non-dual' nature of Divinity.

Since the theme of our present Book is "Sanyas", we shall be limiting our reading of this Upanishad to its Cantos 12 and 13. Although the rest of the Cantos are exceedingly interesting and metaphysically important but we shall be skipping them for the purpose of our present Book. However, just for knowledge, a brief summary of the contents of this entire Upanishad is outlined below.

Cantos 1 and 2 beautifully and graphically describe the genesis of creation. It is a reply by sage Ghorangiras to a question asked by sage Raikwa. It describes the creation of the world and how the Viraat Purush created all the classes in society, the elements such as the vital wind called Pran (or the life sustaining air) and its various manifestations, the Vedas, the myriad forms of the plant and the animal kingdoms, the human race, etc.

Cantos 3 to 5 deal with the concept of the supreme Atma. Canto 3 describes its supremacy over everything else. It describes its fundamental nature, virtues and characteristics. Canto 4 tells us about its habitat in the heart of a creature, and the way this Atma interacts with the world in the three states of consciousness that it exists. Canto 5 enumerates the fundamental forms of worship of this eclectic and ethereal Atma.

Canto 6 postulates that Narayan (the Viraat Purush as Vishnu) is all that there is in this creation; all the different forms of creation, animate or inanimate, visible or invisible, from the microcosm right up to the fathomless macrocosm, are all nothing else but the different revelation or manifestation of one same entity, the supreme, ubiquitous Authority called Lord Narayan.

Canto 7 establishes that all the elements in creation, such as Apaha (water), Tej (energy, vitality, radiance and splendour as well as glory, majesty and mystical powers that are inherent in all the basic elements of creation), Vayu (wind), the Mana (mind and heart, the thoughts and emotions) etc. have the same conscious factor present in all of them which renders them with their respective importance, significance, glories and powers. This 'factor' is the subtle, sublime and imperceptible form of the supreme cosmic consciousness that is the only Authority in creation; it is that authority that not only 'powers' these primary subtle elements of creation, but also 'empowers' the gross sense organs of the creature to act and carry out their assigned functions.

Canto 8 is an extension of canto 4 in as much as it expands on the concept of the pure conscious Atma residing in the cavernous interiors of the heart of a creature.

Canto 9 describes the 'withdrawal symptoms' akin to the death process wherein all the tentacles spread out by the creature in the form of the sense organs of perception, such as the eye, the nose, the ears etc., withdraw into themselves and finally collapse into a state called 'Turiya' which is the 4<sup>th</sup> state of consciousness and is tantamount to obtaining the state of 'Samadhi'. In other words, this Canto describes the process of dissolution and retrogression of creation.

Canto 10 visualises this creation as a vast sphere having concentric strata or circles representing different worlds. These concentric rings or layers represent the different worlds that constitute the fabric of the cosmos; each layer stands for a particular world. At the center of the pile is the creature established or living in the mortal world, called the Prithivi, or earth, which incidentally is supposed to be the foundation upon which the rest of the creation rests. The earth is established in the surrounding space, called the Akash, the Firmament, and this progression continues till the outer ring representing Brahm is reached. This Brahm is the periphery outside which nothing exists. This fantastic and incredulous entity encircles everything from all sides; there is nothing beyond it! This is the outer boundary of the cosmos.

The miracle is that Brahm, which encloses the creation from all sides, also pervades uniformly throughout it as its conscious Atma much like the water which soaks and completely surrounds a piece of sponge placed in a water tank. As far as the sponge is concerned, there is no distinction between the water that surrounds it and the water that is present in its minute pores.

Canto 11 narrates how the Atma makes its exit from the body.

Cantos 12 and 13 deal exclusively with the concept of “Sanyas” as a way of life that is marked by total renunciation which comes with self-realisation of the great spiritual Truths. It describes the life, thought processes and the behaviour of such a person who is truly called a Sanyasi.

Canto 14 enumerates how one element is annihilated or consumed by another; or how one collapses and merges with the one superior to it. It is like a folding telescope, when finally ‘death’, the one with a rapacious and unsatisfied hunger, is itself devoured by Brahm when the former collapsed and merges with the latter. This reminds one of the ultimate collapse of the cosmos into the nothingness from where it came into being at the time of the ‘big bang’ which marked the beginning of the cosmos. Marvellously told, this canto also visualises what remains after the final annihilation, a situation alike the creation of the ‘black hole’, and beyond!

Canto 15 is an extension of the concepts enunciated in canto 14, but in the context of the Pran. It describes how Pran annihilates everything that exists once it decides to make its exit from the body of the creature. This is a metaphor describing that nothing remains after death, and that nothing matters after death. This knowledge (Vidya) provides liberation and deliverance because it removes all misconceived delusions and hallucinations caused by ignorance of the truth pertaining to the falsehood and perishable nature of the material attractions of the world and the futility of having attachments with them.

Finally, canto 16 winds up the metaphysical discussion by describing the importance and significance of this Upanishad along with the benefits that it provides to those who understand its import.

In short, this Upanishad describes the divine, holy, ethereal and esoteric virtues of the supreme entity called the Atma which imbrues and imbues the entire creation from within and from without. It is very similar to Adhyatmo-panishad which is the 15<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.

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## Canto 12.

[The importance of food that is accepted by a Sanyasi is highlighted in this Canto. It also describes the category of food that ought to be eaten by him.]

॥ सुबालोपनिषद् ॥

॥ द्वादशः खण्डः ॥

ॐ नारायणाद्वा अन्नमागतं पक्वं ब्रह्मलोके महासंवर्तके पुनः पक्वमादित्ये पुनः पक्वं क्रव्यादि पुनः पक्वं जालकिलकिलन्नं पर्युषितं पूतमन्नमयाचितमसंकलृप्तमश्लीयान्न कंचन याचेत ॥१॥

om nārāyaṇādvā annamāgataṁ pakvaṁ brahmaloke mahāsaṁvartake punaḥ pakvamāditye punaḥ pakvaṁ kravvādi punaḥ pakvaṁ jālakilaklinnaṁ



paryuṣitaṃ pūtamannamayācitamasamklṛptamaśnīyānna kaṃcana  
yāceta // 1 //

1. OM salutations! ‘Anna’ or food needed to sustain and nourish the creation brought into being by Narayan (Lord Vishnu, the Viraat Purush), was also produced by Narayan. This food needed to be cooked. During the pre-creation period, called the ‘Maha-samvartak’, it was cooked in the Loka or abode where Brahm (the transcendental Supreme Being from whom the whole creation, including Lord Narayan, has evolved) lived. It is called Brahm Loka.

When the creation gradually came into being, the celestial bodies were formed. The cosmic furnace was the cauldron known as the Sun. So the next phase of cooking was done here in the Sun.

The food which was pre-cooked as described above, was then transferred to the world of living creatures. It was subjected to another round of symbolic cooking when it passed through the various stages of preparation before it was made eatable and digestible by the living creature (represented by the human race and the animals). This was the third stage of cooking called ‘Krabya’.

When such pre-cooked food was actually eaten by the creature, the fourth cooking was done in its intestines or stomach. Therefore, this food has been cooked many times over and has become stale, fermented and virtually polluted!

That is why a renunciate hermit or a reclusive ascetic should not eat that food which is stale and polluted because it is akin to eating something that has been cooked the fourth time in the stomach as described above—it is turned into a slushy gruel of a hotchpotch of ingredients which have lost their individuality and taste. [It resembles the excreta that are ejected through the anus after the food is cooked for the fourth time in the intestines of the creature.] The food turns into faecal matter which is of no further use to anyone.

[So what kind of food should an ascetic eat? The answer is--] He should eat sanctified food (i.e. the food that has been cleanly prepared, offered to the Gods first and then a part of it is kept aside especially to be given to the ascetic as a noble gesture and a religious deed. Even this food should not be asked for by a wise ascetic, he should not demand this or that, but should accept such food that is offered to him voluntarily and with due respect by a noble and righteous householder. It should not be taken from a pre-determined household, and it should be begged for at random, i.e. it should not be demanded or ordered by using the threat of a curse, and neither should it be taken from one house more than once because this would create a subtle amount of obligation and attachment towards the family which offers the food, a situation which a wise ascetic should abhor. It would also be tantamount to polluting the food taken. In fact, the food accepted by a hermit or ascetic should have an element of humility and the sanctity of food that is offered to Gods. [That is, the food accepted by him should be offered by the householder with the thought that he is worshipping the Gods and offering oblations to them when he gives any food to the ascetic or hermit. There should not be any hint of charity or doing any kind of favour upon the ascetic or hermit because the food offered to Gods is not charity but a religious duty. It requires humility, piety and purity of mind both for the one who offers the food as well as the ascetic who accepts the food.]

A renunciate person (ascetic, hermit and a mendicant, collectively called a Sanyasi) should not plead for food like a hungry, famished beggar, but only beg with dignity and self esteem befitting his high stature (1).

[Note—Refer: Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 1/5/1—3. This Upanishad is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.]

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### Canto 13

॥ त्रयोदशः खण्डः ॥

बाल्येन तिष्ठासेद्बालस्वभावोऽसङ्गो निरवद्यो मौनेन पाण्डित्येन निरवधिकारतयोपलभ्येत कैवल्यमुक्तं  
निगमनं प्रजापतिरुवाच महत्पदं ज्ञात्वा वृक्षमूले वसेत कुचेलोऽसहाय एकाकी समाधिस्थ आत्मकाम  
आप्तकामो निष्कामो जीर्णकामो हस्तिनि सिंहे दंशे मशके नकुले सर्पराक्षसगन्धर्वे मृत्यो रूपाणि  
विदित्वा न बिभेति कुतश्चेति वृक्षमिव तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानोऽपि न कुप्येत न कम्पेतोत्पलमिव  
तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानोऽपि न कुप्येत न कम्पेताकाशमिव तिष्ठासेच्छिद्यमानोऽपि न कुप्येत न कम्पेत सत्येन  
तिष्ठासेत्सत्योऽयमात्मा ॥१॥

bālyena tiṣṭhāsedbālasvabhāvo'saṅgo niravadyo maunena pāṇḍityena  
niravadhikāratayopalabhyeta kaivalyamuktaṁ nigamanam prajāpatiruvāca  
mahatpadaṁ jñātvā vṛkṣamūle vaseta kucelo'sahāya ekākī samādhistha  
ātmakāma āptakāmo niṣkāmo jīrṇakāmo hastini siṃhe daṁśe maśake nakule  
sarparākṣasagandharve mṛtyo rūpāṇi veditvā na bibheti kutaścaneti vṛkṣamiva  
tiṣṭhāsecchidyamāno'pi na kupyeta na kampetotpalamiva tiṣṭhāsecchidya-  
māno'pi na kupyeta na kampetākāśamiva tiṣṭhāsecchidyamāno'pi na kupyeta  
na kampeta satyena tiṣṭhāsetsatyo'yamātmā // 1 //

1. [This canto describes in detail the demeanours, thoughts, temperaments, and the way of life that is expected from a self-realised, wise and enlightened man.]

To remain in a perpetual child-like state of innocence resulting in having child-like behaviours and temperaments, to remain without any worldly attachments and infatuations, to be free from all forms of corruptions and their attendant influences, to remain silent, to endeavour genuinely towards acquiring truthful knowledge, and to remain mentally and emotionally above the bondages created by time and circumstances, i.e. to remain calm, steady and unruffled even under adverse conditions, or feel elated in favourable ones—this state of existence has been described as the last state of exalted existence of the consciousness. It is called the 'Kaivalya' state<sup>1</sup>.

Prajapati had said that once a man realises what is the best stature for him, what is the highest stature of existence that he should aim for (though it may not have the glitter and charm of this colourful world magically created by delusions), he should stay alone under a tree, wear worn out rag-like clothes, not seek help from anyone, and always remain submerged and engrossed in a state of Samadhi wherein a man remains in a perpetual trance-like state of quietness and oblivious of his surroundings, and when he is perpetually contemplative and meditative. This state helps a man to strive to realise the pure 'self' which is the consciousness in the form of the eternal Atma. Such a man is self contented, is without any desires, aspirations,

yearnings, hopes and expectations. All his desires and volitions have been trounced and vanquished. He has no wish even to live, or to protect himself, and harm others who he thinks are harming his own interests.

This inculcates such fearlessness in him that he is no more afraid of such cruel creatures as an intoxicated elephant, a wild lion, a poisonous scorpion, the mosquito which causes such dangerous and fatal diseases as malaria or dengue, the mongoose, a snake, a demon, a Gandharva (representing an illusive spirit) etc. He treats them as death personified, and having realised that 'death' is the last frontier to be crossed or hurdle to be overcome before one's Atma can be liberated from the bondage of the gross body and merge with the eternal and imperishable Brahm, he rather welcomes death with open arms.

He sincerely endeavours to remain steady and unwavering, unemotional and unaffected like the tree. He strives to become magnanimous, gracious, kind, merciful and forgiving like the tree<sup>2</sup>. If anyone cuts him down in all possible ways (i.e. harms or ruins or hurts him with his deeds or actions or words in every manner imaginable)—e.g. usurps his property, insults him, sends him to exile, kills his family, makes him suffer horribly, he still remains unruffled and unwavering in his vows of treating all alike and remaining equitable, calm, poised and peaceful in the face of the gravest of adversities and provocations. He never pours scorn upon his tormentors; he does not curse them; he does not harbour any ill-will against them; he does not seek retribution or revenge; he does not feel grief, anguished, sorrowful, tormented, humiliated or harmed in any way like the tree of this example. He never gets angry, annoyed, vehement and vengeful against his tormentors. He wishes to remain unattached with and disassociated from all these things and emotions that infringe upon his tranquillity and perpetual meditative state. He wishes to remain untainted and uncorrupted like the lotus flower that remains firmly established in its purity and beauty inspite of being surrounded by the dirty water of the pond so much so that the water does not manage to even stick to its petals.

Even if he is pierced and impaled by a pointed weapon like a spear or crucified with nails (like Jesus Christ was done), he never gets angry and lose his cool. He wishes to remain steady and uniform and uncorrupted like the sky<sup>3</sup>. A wise, enlightened and truly realised man is he who inculcates these noble and great virtues in him—the grand virtues of the tree as well as of the sky. He remains steady and unwavering in his path and conviction. He never loses his cool, poise and composure. He never becomes angry, wrathful, vehement and vindictive. He remains firmly rooted in what is the 'ultimate Truth'. This state is the truthful aspect of the Atma's existence. In this state, the Atma has realised its true nature as being pure consciousness free from all forms of taints and corruptions vis-à-vis the artificial and deluding world. True realisation is the awareness of the falsehood of the external world which looks so deceptively enticing and attractive, and appears to be eternally real. A truly wise man would not find any pith and substance in this world which has the uncanny magical lure to attract even the wisest and hasten their downfall (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Kaivalya* means the 'only one' or the non-dual state. It is a state of existence which is similar to the state of Samadhi in which the man goes about his daily life doing his chores in a routine way without getting emotionally involved in them and even remaining totally oblivious of what he is doing. He remains totally submerged in his inner self and thoughts. He appears in a virtual trance-like state of existence usually observed in realised ascetics and great philosophers. People regard such men as absent minded, but they are so much absorbed in themselves that they are not concerned with others think of them. For them, the external world ceases to exist though they physically live in it and interact with it. This *Kaivalya* form of

existence is tantamount to having emancipation while a man still has a body, because in this state he is free from all sufferings, worries and sorrows as well as all forms of attachments, entanglements and involvements with the artificial and deluding world that are the usual features of a worldly man submerged in world's entrapping charm. This state is comparable to liberation of the soul upon death when it is physically liberated from the bondages of the limitations imposed by the gross body; the only difference being that in the former case the man is alive and enjoys the body, while in the latter case he sheds the burden of the body. The Kaivalya state is considered superior because such a man lives a life of happiness and contentedness; he never suffers from any worldly miseries and worries, he treats the world around him as of no consequence, and remains indifferent to its deluding effects and their entanglements. On the other hand, the ordinary man might find emancipation upon death, but his life is a burden while he is still alive in it. Such a man has not truly understood the teachings of the scriptures; he has not understood the spirit of spiritualism, for their main aim is to give peace and tranquillity to the tormented soul and help in its liberation from the deluding effects of the body and the world. This concept has been elaborately described in Muktiko-panishad which is the 19<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.

According to Yoga Upanishads, Kaivalya Mukti is achieved even when the creature is alive because it primarily involves total realisation and disassociation from the body and the world with which it has to interact. When the seeker dies, he simply abandons his mortal coil, the gross body consisting of the different sense organs, and merges his Pran or the Atma with the macrocosm outside. Since the word 'Kaivalya' means 'the only', this form of Mukti refers to the realisation of the one and the only spiritual Truth which is the absolute and irrefutable Reality in creation.

Since the Advaitya school believes in only one end of the soul— its merger with the parent Soul— they emphasis 'Kaivalya Mukti' as the only form of salvation and emancipation. The word Kaivalya itself means 'only', thereby implying that there is no other forms of Mukti except the one when the Atma abandons the gross body which is like a shackle for it, and then inseparably and indistinguishably merging with the supreme transcendental Soul of the cosmos. This is the eclectic and holistic form of Mukti extolled by the Upanishads. This Mukti means the dissolution or merger of the individual soul with the parent supreme Soul. The realisation that the soul of the individual creature is the same as the cosmic Soul residing in all the creatures of this world, to see the supreme Brahm as a resident of the inner-self of the individual creature as its Atma, and identifying oneself with that Atma which is synonymous with that supreme Brahm, which in turn leads to the recognition of non-dual nature of the soul of the creature and the supreme Soul of the cosmos, realising therefore that there is no notion as 'duality' when dealing with divinity and the supreme transcendental being called 'Brahm' vis-à-vis the creature, and other such basic tenets of Vedanta are the foundation upon which Kaivalya Mukti rests.

<sup>2</sup>The *tree* never moves. It gives shelter and shade to everyone notwithstanding their intention to harm it by cutting it down. It is so generous and impartial that it shelters a lion, an elephant, a serpent, a mongoose et al equally without any distinction. Selfish people cut it down, but instead of cursing them it sprouts new shoot and leaves to grow once again and resume its service of providing shade and fruits and even the firewood to the same cruel men who had cut it down earlier. The fruit of the tree nourishes all without any differentiation. Therefore, a truly wise and enlightened man is compared to a tree for his magnanimity and generosity.

<sup>3</sup>The sky is pregnant with a wide variety of impurities. It is full of celestial bodies besides cosmic debris. It has the burning furnace of the sun as well as the cool pitcher of nectar symbolised by the moon. The black clouds of a storm with its stabs of ferocious lightening coexist with white fluffy clouds floating lazily across the calm sky. There are birds of prey and there are harmless kites flying in it. There is the polluted haze of the city as is the pristine clear atmosphere of a village and the mountain. There is the brightness of the day and the foreboding darkness of the night. But the wonder is that none of these really affect the sky at all—it remains clear and untainted in its basic nature and form. All these things cited here are extraneous to the fundamental nature and characteristic of the sky. The sky treats all of them with the same magnanimity and kindness. Similarly, a wise man treats all the creatures with whom he has to interact in this world with the same equanimity and fortitude as the sky.]

सर्वेषामेव गन्धानां पृथिवी हृदयं सर्वेषामेव रसानामापो हृदयं सर्वेषामेव रूपाणां तेजो हृदयं सर्वेषामेव  
स्पर्शानां वायुर्हृदयं सर्वेषामेव शब्दानामाकाशं हृदयं सर्वेषामेव गतीनामव्यक्तं हृदयं सर्वेषामेव सत्त्वानां  
मृत्युर्हृदयं मृत्युर्वै परे देव एकीभवतीति परस्तात्र सन्नासत्र सदसदित्येतन्निर्वाणानुशासनमिति  
वेदानुशासनमिति वेदानुशासनम् ॥२॥

॥ इति सुबालोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

sarveṣāmeva gandhānāṃ pṛthivī hr̥dayaṃ sarveṣāmeva rasānāmāpo hr̥dayaṃ  
sarveṣāmeva rūpāṇāṃ tejo hr̥dayaṃ sarveṣāmeva sparśānāṃ vāyurhr̥dayaṃ  
sarveṣāmeva śabdānāmākāśaṃ hr̥dayaṃ sarveṣāmeva gatīnāmavyaktaṃ  
hr̥dayaṃ sarveṣāmeva sattvānāṃ mṛtyurhr̥dayaṃ mṛtyurvai pare deva  
ekībhavatīti parastānna sannāsanna sadasadityetannirvāṇānuśāsanamiti  
vedānuśāsanamiti vedānuśāsanam // 2 //

// thus ends Subal Upanishad //

2. The ‘earth’ is at the heart or core of all types of ‘smells’ (because smell originate from things having their birth on earth and it stays close to the earth; if there was no earth, there would be no such perception as ‘smell’; see also canto 9, verse no.3, and canto 5, verse no.3 in this context).

The ‘water’ is at the heart or core of all types of ‘tastes’ (because taste can be felt only when the food dissolves in the saliva in the mouth, and saliva is a fluid based on water; besides this, all the chemicals present in food that renders it its characteristic taste and flavour become active only when they are dissolved in water and reacted upon by the various enzymes of the body which create the necessary impulses that are interpreted by the brain as ‘taste or flavour’; these chemicals and enzymes need water to become active and activate the taste buds; see also canto 9, verse no. 4, and canto 5, verse no. 4 in this context).

The ‘light’ present in the eyes is at the heart or core of all forms of shapes, sizes and colours that are ‘seen’ or are ‘visible’ in this world (because it is the light that lightens up the things and makes them visible to the eye, and it is the consciousness present as the ‘light’ of the eye that enables that organ to see anything; this is evident when one is unable to see anything in the dark; see also canto 9, verse no.1, and canto 5, verse no.1 in this context).

The ‘wind or air’ element is at the heart or core of all perceptions of ‘touch’ (because the subtlest feeling of the wind or a soft breeze ‘touching’ the skin establishes that the surface of the body represented by the skin—to the exclusion of all other organs—is responsible for the feeling the sense of touch; the wind’s touch is very soft and subtle, softer and subtler than the touch of even the feather; see also canto 9, verse no. 5, and canto 5, verse no.5 in this context).

The ‘sky or space’ element is at the heart of all kinds of the ‘spoken word’ (because the spoken word, which is a form of sound, needs the space of the sky to travel and make itself heard, as sound travels in waves in the open space of the sky, and any solid lying between the source of sound and the person who hears it creates an obstacle that impedes its transmission; see also canto 9, verse no. 6, and canto 5, verse no. 2 in this context).

The secret and inherent temperaments, habits and inclinations of an individual, which form his character and decide his general outlooks, are called his ‘Abyakta Prakriti’. This Prakriti or innate nature of his is at the heart or core of all his behaviours, his actions and deeds, his traditions and customs, his beliefs and faiths, his character traits, habits, manners and behavioural patterns, his course of life and his fate, etc. [That is, the fundamental nature of a man decides what he is and what he makes of his life. These special characters are specific for a man and they are hidden inside his bosom but reveal themselves in the form of his behaviours, thinking, habits and nature, and such other traits that he depicts in his day to day life. The predominance of a particular quality out of the three basic qualities of Sat, Raj and Tam that are integral part of all living beings decide his personal unique behaviour and the type of man he is; what would be his thinking and how he would interpret knowledge. See also canto 9, verse no.7—14, and canto 5, verse no.6—9, 11—12 in this context.]

‘Death’ is the ultimate and irrefutable ‘truth’ for all the creatures (because all those who are born must die; this is an incontrovertible and unquestioned fact of life and creation; see also canto 1, verse no. 4 in this context). The death is a metaphor for ‘end’ and the ‘final frontier from where there is no return’. This death takes the creature to its final destination which is Brahm. It is synonymous with final emancipation and salvation; it is liberation from the bondages of the body and the soul’s deliverance from this entrapping deluding world. It is the situation when the individual’s Atma or soul becomes one with the supreme Atma or soul of the cosmos; it is the merger of the former with the latter. With this merger, nothing of the former is left; i.e. the individual Atma of the creature becomes one and the same with the cosmic Atma called the attribute-less and formless and nameless entity known as Brahm. Beyond that, there is no concept of ‘true or false’, nor is there anything as the ‘ultimate truth’, because what the Atma has managed to achieve by its merger with Brahm is in itself the ultimate truth; it is the final frontier. [Refer Canto 11 of this Upanishad in this context.]

This is the preaching of the Vedas; this is their tenet, their axiom and maxim; this is the essence of their canons. This wisdom is the path of emancipation and salvation (2).

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### (3.4) Niralamba Upanishad:

The word Niralamba is made up of two words—viz. ‘Ni’ and ‘Alamban’. The second word ‘Alamban’ refers to a help and support or prop upon which one depends or relies or take recourse to in order to reach one’s goal, while the first word ‘Ni’ refers to a negation of the first. Hence, in this Upanishad it is emphasised that one has to be wary of misconceived and ill-advised methods of spiritual liberation and deliverance usually in vogue which can do more harm than good to him if not interpreted and employed judiciously and correctly along with the required intellectual level of wisdom and erudition as well as spiritual guidance needed for the purpose. It would be like the case of taking the apparently right medicine without correct medical diagnosis and supervision, in a wrong dose and wrong time, and without observing proper dietary and other precautions.

A wise spiritual aspirant is advised to overcome his reliance on all external means of obtaining spiritual upliftment, to break free from all misconceived and erroneous advice given to him previously if he sincerely desires spiritual liberation and deliverance for himself. No external prop is actually needed and can never become a cause for his true spiritual emancipation and salvation. Genuine Brahm realisation would not need any outside support and aid to prove its truthfulness and worthiness.

This Upanishad defines the various metaphysical terms in a crisp, succinct and brief way. It starts by asking questions and then goes on to answer each one of them, and these answers define those terms in a precise manner. It defines, inter alia, such terms as Brahm, Jiva, Prakriti, Parmatma, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, the different Gods (such as Indra, Yam, Surya, Chandra etc.), the non-Gods (such as demons, Satan, evil spirits etc.), humans and animals, the different castes and classes in society, sorrows and happiness, what constitutes freedom and bondage, the distinctive features of a Guru (teacher) and his disciple, a wise man and a fool, what is worthy of acceptance and what should be forsaken, who is a true renunciate called a Sanyasi, etc. The remarkable thing is all these terms have been explained very briefly as if this Upanishad wishes to round off the elaborate discussions of other Upanishads which endeavour to elucidate on these topics in great detail, and instead it presents their essential meaning and fundamental aspects in a nutshell. It therefore acts as a sort of reference hand book or a concise reference pocket book for spiritual aspirants.

॥ निरालम्बोपनिषद् ॥

ॐ नमः शिवाय गुरवे सच्चिदानन्दमूर्तये । निष्प्रपञ्चाय शान्ताय निरालम्बाय तेजसे । निरालम्बं समाश्रित्य सालम्बं विजहाति यः । स संन्यासी च योगी च कैवल्यं पदमश्नुते ॥१॥

om namaḥ śivāya gurave saccidānandamūrtaye / niṣprapañcāya śāntāya nirālambāya tejase / nirālambaṃ samāśritya sālambaṃ vijahāti yaḥ / sa saṁnyāsī ca yogī ca kaivalyaṃ padamaśnute // 1 //

1. OM salutations! I pay my obeisance to and bow reverentially before Lord Shiva who is the Guru (moral preceptor, teacher and guide) of the whole world, is an embodiment of eternal truth, pure consciousness and infinite bliss—salutations to him! He is free from all artificiality and delusions, is calm, tranquil, serene and peaceful, he needs no support, base or shelter for himself because he is self-supporting, and he is a personification of such eclectic virtues as divinity, energy, radiance, splendour, glory and majesty. Salutations to such a magnificent Lord!

A person who takes the shelter or support of the supreme Authority which needs no support for itself (i.e. which is so potent and powerful, so majestic and authoritative that it does not need any support for its own existence and sustenance, and therefore is competent and able to support others, because only the one who is self-sufficient and possesses self-strength can hope to help others), and abandons the support of and stops to seek succour from the world which is not independent and relies upon something else to support it, is a true and honest Sanyasi ( who is a renunciate who has forsaken the deluding world and its illusive charms) as well as a true and sincere Yogi (ascetic, hermit). Such a person is the one who achieves the exalted state of 'Kaivalya'<sup>1</sup>, which is the ultimate form of liberation and deliverance whereby the creature's own individual self is irretrievably lost and merged with the pure cosmic self, which is another way of saying that the microcosmic individual Atma of the creature has dissolved its self into and become one with the macrocosmic universal Soul of the cosmos, i.e. with Brahm. This is the highest level of emancipation and salvation that a creature can hope to achieve, and it gives the person immense peace and happiness; he attains the state of blissfulness that is the hallmark of those who have no worry in this world (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Kaivalya—The word *Kaivalya* means the 'only one' or the non-dual state. It is a state of existence which is similar to the state of Samadhi in which the man goes about his daily life doing his chores in a routine way without getting emotionally involved in them and even remaining totally oblivious of what he is doing. He remains totally submerged in his inner self and thoughts. He appears in a virtual trance-like state of existence usually observed in realised ascetics and great philosophers. People regard such men as absent minded, but they are so much absorbed in themselves that they are not concerned with others think of them. For them, the external world ceases to exist though they physically live in it and interact with it. This Kaivalya form of existence is tantamount to having emancipation while a man still has a body, because in this state he is free from all sorts of sufferings, worries and sorrows as well as all forms of attachments, entanglements and involvements with the artificial and deluding world that are the usual features of a worldly man submerged in world's entrapping charm. This state is comparable to liberation of the soul upon death when it is physically liberated from the bondages of the limitations imposed by the gross body; the only difference being that in the former case the man is alive and enjoys the body, while in the latter case he sheds the burden of the body. The Kaivalya state is considered superior because such a man lives a life of happiness and contentedness; he never suffers from any worldly miseries and worries, he treats the world around him as of no consequence, and remains indifferent to its deluding effects and their entanglements. On the other hand, the ordinary man might find emancipation upon death, but his life is a burden while he is still alive in it. Such a man has not truly understood the teachings of the scriptures; he



has not understood the spirit of spiritualism, for their main aim is to give peace and tranquility to the tormented soul and help in its liberation from the deluding effects of the body and the world. This concept has been elaborately described in Mukti-panishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition as well as in Sarva Saar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.

According to Yoga Upanishads, Kaivalya Mukti is achieved even when the creature is alive because it primarily involves total realisation and disassociation from the body and the world with which it has to interact. When the seeker dies, he simply abandons his mortal coil, the gross body consisting of the different sense organs, and merges his Pran or the Atma with the macrocosm outside. Since the word 'Kaivalya' means 'the only', this form of Mukti refers to the realisation of the one and the only spiritual Truth which is the absolute and irrefutable Reality in creation.

Since the Advaita school believes in only one end of the soul— its merger with the parent Soul— they emphasis 'Kaivalya Mukti' as the only form of salvation and emancipation. The word Kaivalya itself means 'only', thereby implying that there is no other forms of Mukti except the one when the Atma abandons the gross body which is like a shackle for it, and then inseparably and indistinguishably merging with the supreme transcendental Soul of the cosmos. This is the eclectic and holistic form of Mukti extolled by the Upanishads. This Mukti means the dissolution or merger of the individual soul with the parent supreme Soul. The realisation that the soul of the individual creature is the same as the cosmic Soul residing in all the creatures of this world, to see the supreme Brahm as a resident of the inner-self of the individual creature as its Atma, and identifying oneself with that Atma which is synonymous with that supreme Brahm, which in turn leads to the recognition of non-dual nature of the soul of the creature and the supreme Soul of the cosmos, realising therefore that there is no notion as 'duality' when dealing with divinity and the supreme transcendental being called 'Brahm' vis-à-vis the creature, and other such basic tenets of Vedanta are the foundation upon which Kaivalya Mukti rests.]

एषामज्ञानजन्तूनां समस्तारिष्टशान्तये । यद्यद्बोद्धव्यमखिलं तदाशङ्क्य ब्रवीम्यहम् ॥२॥

eṣāmajñānajanantūnāṃ samastāriṣṭaśāntaye /

yadyadboddhavyamakhilam tadāśaṅkya bravīmyaham // 2 //

2. In order to dispel the different spiritual hurdles and overcome the various mental confusions and perplexities that confound the ignorant people of this mundane world, I would now raise queries and answer them myself one by one to remove all doubts and put to rest all confusions (2).

किं ब्रह्म । क ईश्वरः । को जीवः । का प्रकृतिः । कः परमात्मा । को ब्रह्मा । को विष्णुः । को रुद्रः । क इन्द्रः । कः शमनः । कः सूर्यः । कश्चन्द्रः । के सुराः । के असुराः । के पिशाचाः । के मनुष्याः । काः स्त्रियः । के पश्वादयः । किं स्थावरम् । के ब्राह्मणादयः । का जातिः । किं कर्म । किमकर्म । किं ज्ञानम् । किमज्ञानम् । किं सुखम् । किं दुःखम् । कः स्वर्गः । को नरकः । को बन्धः ।

। को मोक्षः । क उपास्यः । कः शिष्यः । को विद्वान् । को मूढः । किमासुरम् । किं तपः । किं परमं पदम् । किं ग्राहम् । कः संन्यासीत्याशङ्क्याह ब्रह्मेति ॥३॥

kiṃ brahma / ka īśvaraḥ / ko jīvaḥ / kā prakṛtiḥ / kaḥ paramātmā / ko brahmā / ko viṣṇuḥ / ko rudraḥ / ka indraḥ / kaḥ śamanaḥ / kaḥ sūryaḥ / kaścandraḥ / ke surāḥ / ke asurāḥ / ke piśācāḥ / ke manuṣyāḥ / kāḥ striyaḥ / ke paśvādayaḥ / kiṃ sthāvaram / ke brāhmaṇādayaḥ / kā jātiḥ / kiṃ karma / kimakarma / kiṃ jñānam / kimajñānam / kiṃ sukham / kiṃ duḥkham / kaḥ svargaḥ / ko naraḥ / ko bandhaḥ / ko mokṣaḥ / ka upāsyāḥ / kaḥ śiṣyaḥ / ko vidvān / ko mūḍhaḥ / kimāsuram / kiṃ tapaḥ / kiṃ paramaṃ padam / kiṃ grāhyam / kimagrāhyam / kaḥ saṃnyāsītyāśaṅkyāha brahmeti // 3 //

3. What is Brahm (the Supreme Being)? Who is Ishwar (Lord God)? Who is Jiva (the living creature, the living being)? What is Prakriti (nature, habit, the original source of everything)? Who is Parmatma (the subtle and sublime supreme Soul)? Who are Brahma (the creator of visible world), Vishnu (the sustainer) and Rudra (Shiva; the concluder)? Who is Indra (the king of Gods)? Who is Yam (the God of death)? Who is Sun? Who is Moon? Who are the Gods? Who are the non-Gods (such as the demons and monsters)? Who are the evil spirits, phantoms, Satan etc.? Who is a human? Who is a woman? What are animals? What are inanimate things? Who are Brahmins and others? What is a caste? What is meant by deed and what is meant by not doing deeds? What are Gyan (truthful knowledge and erudition, wisdom and enlightenment) and Agyan (ignorance and the lack of truthful knowledge, wisdom and erudition)? What is sorrow and anguish (Dukh), and what is happiness and joy (Sukh)? What are heaven and hell? What is meant by freedom and bondage? Who is worthy of Upasana (i.e. who is worthy of having devotion and dedication for; of worshipping, adoring, honouring and revering)? Who is a true disciple? Who is wise, adroit, knowledgeable, erudite, expert and scholarly? Who is stupid, foolish and idiotic; who has a low intellect and deemed to be good for nothing? What is meant by 'being demonic'? What is Tapa (austerity, penance, sufferance of hardships)? What is called the 'supreme stature'? What is acceptable and what not? Who is a true Sanyasi (a truly renunciate person)?

By asking these fundamental questions, the Upanishadic sage sought to explain the various concepts through the medium of specific answers to these individual queries (3).

स होवाच महदहंकारपृथिव्यप्तेजोवाय्वाकाशत्वेन बृहद्रूपेणाण्डकोशेन कर्मज्ञानार्थरूपतया भासमानमद्वितीयमखिलोपाधिविनिर्मुक्तं तत्सकलशक्त्युपबृंहितमनाद्यनन्तं शुद्धं शिवं शान्तं निर्गुणमित्यादिवाच्यमनिर्वाच्यं चैतन्यं ब्रह्म । ईश्वर इति च । ब्रह्मैव स्वशक्तिं प्रकृत्यभिधेयामाश्रित्य लोकान्सृष्ट्वा प्रविश्यान्तर्यामित्वेन ब्रह्मादीनां बुद्धीन्द्रियनियन्तृत्वादीश्वरः ॥४॥

sa hovāca mahadahaṃkārapṛthivyaptejovāyvākāśatvena brāhadrūpeṇāṇḍakośena karmajñānārtharūpatayā bhāsamānamadvitīyamakhilopādhivinirmuktaṃ tatsakalāśaktyupabṛṃhitamanādyanantaṃ śuddhaṃ śivaṃ śāntaṃ nirguṇamityādivācyamanirvācyam caitanyaṃ brahma / īśvara iti ca // brahmaiva svaśaktiṃ prakṛtyabhidheyāmāśritya lokānsṛṣṭvā

praviśyāntaryāmitvena brahmādinām buddhīndriyaniyantṛtvādīśvaraḥ // 4 //

4. Now the sage begins his discourse—‘The one who has ‘Mahattatwa’ as one of its qualities—i.e. one who is majestic, magnificent, glorious, indescribable, stupendous and enigmatic in all respects, who has an essential form that is colossus, all-inclusive, majestic, macrocosmic, glorious, magnificent and beyond description, a form that is of stupendous proportions and is of measureless potentials, the one who is the progenitor and creator of everything in this creation, including even the negative traits of Mada (arrogance, haughtiness) and Ahankar (ego, pride) which are subtly and invariably present in all the living creatures of this creation, the one who incorporates all the essential ingredients that constitute the vast universe, such as the so-called five elements consisting of earth, water, energy or fire, wind or air, and sky or space (Prithivi, Apaha, Tej, Vayu and Akash respectively), the one who can be experienced and witnessed in the form of rewards of doing deeds (Karma) and acquiring truthful knowledge suffused with wisdom and enlightenment (Gyan), the one who is unique, un-parallel and one of his kind, the one who has no defining attributes and qualities that can limit his definition and scope, the one who is beyond the purview of quality and title, the one who is almighty and omnipotent, the one who has no beginning or end, the one who is pure, immaculate, pristine and divine, the one who is ‘Shiva’, i.e. is truth, beauty, auspiciousness, renunciation, peace and bliss personified, the one who is beyond the purview of the three Gunas (the Sattva--noble, Raj--mediocre, and Tam—lowest and mean qualities that are inherently present in all the creatures of this creation in varying proportions), the one who is so indescribable, enigmatic and mysterious that he is beyond the reach of speech (i.e. it is not possible to assign words to describe him; the speech fails to find words to define him), and is the one who is pure consciousness personified—such a supreme, transcendental, enigmatic, absolutely indescribable and unqualified entity is known as ‘Brahm’.

Now ‘Ishwar’ is being defined. The above described Brahm is known as Ishwar when, inter alia, he uses his most stupendous, mysterious and glorious powers and potentials of creation, called Prakriti or Nature, to create this magnificent creation. Having thus created it, he quietly, secretly and imperceptibly, but certainly and authoritatively sneaks into the creation to become a part of it and remain firmly ensconced in it; he becomes universally and uniformly present in it; he pervades throughout it in an invisible, subtle, universal form (as the Atma or soul or the fundamental identity or the essence of the entire creation). In this intangible and sublime macrocosmic form or supreme regulating capacity, it is the Authority that controls the creator Brahma, the sustainer Vishnu, and the annihilator Rudra (Shiva). In effect, this Ishwar controls the three Trinity Gods who stand for the three fundamental aspects or phases of creation, i.e. beginning, development and conclusion.

This Ishwar controls the mind and intellect by symbolically exercising authority over Brahma because the latter God is considered the wise patriarch who created the vast repository of knowledge in the form of the Vedas. This Ishwar controls the organs of the body by symbolically exercising authority over Vishnu because the body does so many deeds and undertakes so many constructive activities to sustain life in a creature as well as the fact that the body of the creature (here specially referring to the man) is an image of the Viraat Purush, the subtler form of Vishnu at the macro level of creation. In fact, this Viraat Purush had created all the Gods from different parts of his body, and when he created man in his own image,

these Gods took up residence in the corresponding organ of the body of the man. [Refer Aitereyo Upanishad of Rig Veda tradition.]

Similarly, this Ishwar inculcates renunciation and dispassion in a creature by exercising authority over Shiva who is an incarnate renunciate, and at the same time it creates such conditions that impel a creature to cause its own destruction by becoming evil, sinful, pervert and lowly as symbolised by the characteristic virtue of Shiva in his angry form of Rudra to cause destruction and death.

In short, this Ishwar or the supreme Lord is that authority who resides in the bosom of the cosmic body of creation at the macro level as its controlling centre. In terms of Vedanta, Ishwar is the macrocosmic Atma or soul of the creation. In other words, Ishwar is the causal body of the vast cosmos in which the supreme Soul of the creation resides (4).

[Note—1. The difference between *Brahm* and *Ishwar* is very clear here. While *Brahm* is the pure consciousness or Atma or Soul of creation, *Ishwar* is the causal body in which this *Brahm* resides at the cosmic or macro level. This *Ishwar* is the sum-total of all the causal bodies that form the composite structure called the vast creation. When the creation came into being, this structure was replicated at the micro level.

2. The mind-intellect of an individual creature is called the subtle body of the creation at the micro level. When we talk about *Ishwar*, we are dealing with the concept at the macro level, and this macrocosmic subtle body is called *Hiranyagarbha*, a word used as a synonym for *Brahma* the creator as well as for *Vishnu* the sustainer in various Purans. A single word when applied to different contexts assumes different meaning. So, without going into dichotomous discussions which would only add to confusion, let us concentrate on the fundamental meaning of ‘*Ishwar*’ instead of getting bogged down by too much technicalities of what is written in which Puran. Refer also to *Ishavasya Upanishad* in the context of the term ‘*Ishwar*’.]

जीव इति च ब्रह्मविष्ण्वीशानेन्द्रादीनां नामरूपद्वारा स्थूलोऽहमिति मिथ्याध्यासवशाज्जीवः ।  
सोऽहमेकोऽपि देहारम्भकभेदवशाद्बहुजीवः ॥५॥

jīva iti ca brahmaviṣṇvīśānendrādīnāṃ nāmarūpadvārā sthūlo’hamiti mithyā-  
dhyāsavaśājīvaḥ /so’hameko’pi dehārambhakabhedavaśādbahujīvaḥ // 5 //

5. The question ‘Who is a Jiva’ is being answered now. When that *Ishwar*—who has assumed the various cosmic forms that are subtle and sublime, and which have such names as *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Rudra* and *Indra*—erroneously begins to belief that it has a gross body with a specific name and form, having certain qualities and characters, it becomes what is known as a *Jiva* or a living creature having a body and attributes (in this mortal world). Although the *Ishwar* is immutable, universal, uniform and one single indivisible supreme entity, although it is pure consciousness characterised and defined by such notions as ‘That is I’ (i.e. the supreme transcendental Being is no one else but me), but when it fallaciously thinks that it has a gross body having innumerable forms and shapes, it becomes a ‘creature’ or a *Jiva* because creatures of this mortal world have different forms and names, each distinct from the other, and each having an independent existence, unique characters and its own identity. This is due to the presence of ignorance and delusions about the truth (5).

[Note—As we note here, the creature is none else but the supreme Lord called *Ishwar* who has come under the influence of ignorance and delusions. Therefore, if the creature overcomes this hurdle, that is if it overcomes ignorance about its true nature

and essence that it is the Supreme Being in a gross body, he would rise above the mundane and become enlightened to the fact that his true identity is not the gross body but his immaculate self which is pure consciousness called the Atma, and that this Atma is the supreme Soul of the cosmos personified. This is true self-realisation; it is knowing the ‘true self’; it is realising that there no difference between the true self and Ishwar who is the Lord of the creation, and if one does not overcome ignorance and delusions then he would face the same fate as faced by the Lord himself—i.e. he would fall into the trap of delusions and remain engrossed and submerged in this quagmire known as the ‘world’.]

प्रकृतिरिति च ब्रह्मणः सकाशान्नानाविचित्रजगन्निर्माणसामर्थ्यबुद्धिरूपा ब्रह्मशक्तिरेव प्रकृतिः ॥६॥

prakṛitiriti ca brahmaṇaḥ sakāśānnānāvicitrajagannirmāṇasāmārthya-  
buddhirūpā brahmaśaktireva prakṛtiḥ // 6 //

6. What is Prakriti? That which creates this colourful canvas of creation in association with the supreme transcendental Brahm, that which derives this stupendous ability and magnificent potentials of conjuring up this infinitely vast and most fascinating, this multifarious and endless creation of all possible hues and shades because of its association with Brahm, that which represents, personifies and exhibits the powers of intelligence, wisdom, skills, craftsmanship and expertise that Brahm possesses (as is evident in the fact of it being able to create this world literally from nothing, and injecting it with stupendous magical powers of self propagation and self sustenance leading to eternity and perpetuity that Brahm only possesses)—such an enigmatic and indescribable entity, which is often said to be synonymous with its principal source Brahm, is called Prakriti (the cosmic form of “Nature”) (6).

परमात्मेति च देहादेः परतरत्वाद् ब्रह्मैव परमात्मा ॥७॥

paramātmēti ca dehādeḥ parataratvād brahmaiva paramātmā // 7 //

7. The question ‘Who or what is Parmatma’ is being answered now. Brahm is called the supreme transcendental Soul or Parmatma because he remains above and beyond the purview of such gross and perishable entities as the body consisting of equally gross and perishable ingredients (7).

[Note—It is a established doctrine of the Upanishads that Atma, which is a micro form of the Brahm residing in the individual creature, is separate and independent of the gross body of the creature; it is pure conscious and the truthful self while the body is merely the habitat of that Atma while it lives in this world to suffer because of its past deeds done due to its ignorance. We have seen previously in verse no. 5 above that even the supreme Lord called Ishwar has to suffer if he allows himself to be dominated by ignorance and delusions, so there is no wonder if the Atma has to likewise undergo punishment for its delusions and ignorance by taking a birth and then dying, although such notions as ‘birth and death’ are applicable to the gross body and do not actually apply to the Atma which is eternal and infinite. But since the ignorance-influenced creature thinks that its body is its true identity, and since the Atma is the true self of the creature, it logically follows that what the creature thinks and does is done by the Atma. This paradox—that the Atma is independent, pure and dispassionate but at the same time it is convicted of doing deeds that are actually not

done by it but done by the body of the creature—is caused by ignorance, and this in its wake creates delusions that trap the Atma into the snare of life and death.

Thus, the distinction between the ‘Atma’ and the ‘Parmatma’ is very obvious and clear. That consciousness which resides in the body of a creature (Jiva) is called Atma (Jiva-Atma), and it is this Atma that has created so many problems for its self by its association with the body. It is affected by its habitat, the body, much like anything wrapped in a coloured plastic bag would appear to have the colour of the material used for the bag. On the other hand, the Parmatma is the supreme Atma, the one who is not dependent on any body for support and residence, therefore not subject to either any of the taints associated with the body or to any limitations imposed by it. It is free as a sky borne bird, not bound like a caged bird.

Therefore it follows that if the Atma is able to overcome its limitations and flaws that it has allowed its self to be affected with by the virtue of its residence in and close association with the gross body of the creature, it would rise high in stature and become a Parmatma. Since the Atma is the truthful identity of a man, as soon as his Atma steps on the high citadel of holiness and divinity, the man also becomes God-like or Ishwar-like.]

स ब्रह्मा स विष्णुः स इन्द्रः स शमनः स सूर्यः स चन्द्रस्ते सुरास्ते असुरास्ते पिशाचास्ते मनुष्यास्ताः  
स्त्रियस्ते पश्वादयस्तत्स्थावरं ते ब्राह्मणादयः ॥८॥

sa brahmā sa viṣṇuḥ sa indraḥ sa śamanah sa sūryaḥ sa candraste surāste  
asurāste piśācāste manuṣyāstāḥ striyaste paśvādayastatsthāvaraṃ te  
brāhmaṇādayaḥ // 8 //

8. It is this Parmatma (supreme Atma or cosmic universal Soul) that has revealed himself in myriad forms, such as Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer), Indra (the king of Gods), Yam (the God of death), Sun, Moon, and other such Gods. It is he who has revealed or manifested himself as demons, evil spirits and devils as well as a man, a woman and animals etc. Similarly, it is he who is known as Brahmins (i.e. as humans who are wise and learned ones) as well as those humans who are lowly and mean. Likewise, even the inanimate parts of creation (such as the immobile plants and other immovable things as mountains, earth etc. as well as the mobile ones such as water in the river, air in the form of breeze etc.) are all manifestations of Brahm (8).

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ॥९॥

sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma neha nānāsti kiñcana // 9 //

9. This entire universe or cosmos is Brahm, and nothing but Brahm. In all sooth and without gainsay, there is nothing that is not Brahm (9).

जातिरिति च । न चर्मणो न रक्तस्य न मांसस्य न चास्थिनः । न जातिरात्मनो जातिर्व्यवहारप्रकल्पिता  
॥९०॥

jātiriti ca / na carmaṇo na raktasya na māṃsasya na cāsthinaḥ / na  
jātirātmano jātirvyavahāraprakalpītā // 10 //

10. The skin, blood, flesh, bones and the Atma/soul have no caste, creed, colour or race. These have been conceived as a practical measure to regulate and control our day to day behaviours and interactions with each other (10).

[Note—This is an important verse which clearly states that all are equal in the eyes of the scriptures. The different classes or castes or sects or creeds or races which the society has been divided and classified into are man made and artificial. It is just for the sake of convenience of the purpose of delineation of duties and to lay down procedure and guidelines for mutual interactions and determine one's specific place in the hierarchy of existence even as we have a system of hierarchical governance in place in modern society. For example, a Brahmin was supposed to be the teacher and guide for the rest of the society, and the Kshatriya was supposed to give protection to it, while its finances and material needs were looked after by the Vaishya, and it was manually served by the Shudra. This delegation of duties and responsibilities demanded that each person belonging to a particular class should adhere to the laws and regulations meant for that particular class to ensure uninterrupted carrying out of duties and prevention of friction and overlapping of functions causing unnecessary tension and duplicity. This segregation was therefore meant to make life regulated and easy, and not to say that one man was in anyway superior to another in terms of his essential being as a human and a living creature. This is because the Atma or soul, which is pure and conscious, is one in all the creatures, whether he is a man or a woman, a Brahmin or a Shudra. Further, other components of the body, such as the skin, blood etc., are obviously the same in all humans, and if taken in their fundamental and essential form they are the same in all living creatures, whether they are humans or animals. For example, blood when analysed in a chemical laboratory will show the same principal constituents whether it is taken from a Brahmin or from a Kshatriya; blood's constituents would remain the same for all segments of society. Similarly, skin and other parts of the body have no basic difference. The visible and other apparent differences that appear in different forms of life which are fundamentally the same is also supported by the Upanishads when they say that the Atma assumes different forms depending upon its past deeds and their accumulated effects, but the essential form of this Atma remains the same nevertheless. When we talk of 'life' we mean the entire living kingdom consisting of the plants and the animals, including the humans. This is the holistic view of the Upanishads.]

कर्मेति च क्रियमाणेन्द्रियैः कर्माण्यहं करोमीत्यध्यात्मनिष्ठतया कृतं कर्मैव कर्म । अकर्मेति च कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वाद्यहंकारतया बन्धरूपं जन्मादिकारणं नित्यनैमित्तिकयागव्रततपोदानादिषु फलाभिसंधानं यत्तदकर्म ॥११-१२॥

karmeti ca kriyamāṇendriyaiḥ karmāṇyahaṁ karomītyadhyātmaniṣṭhatayā  
kṛtaṁ karmaiva karma / akarmeti ca kartṛtvabhokṛtvādyahaṁkāratayā  
bandharūpaṁ janmādikāraṇaṁ nityanaimittikayāgavratatapodānādiṣu  
phalābhisandhānaṁ yattadakarma // 11-12 //

11-12. All deeds done by the organs of action of the body are termed as 'Karma'. When the creature thinks that 'I have done a particular deed', then it is defined as the deed done by the Atma because the Atma is the truthful identity of the creature, and the word 'I' applies to it. On the other hand, if the deed is done dispassionately without the involvement of the true self, then it does not have any effect upon the Atma because the latter remains neutral, aloof and uninvolved in what the body does. The sense of ego and pride accentuated by success and its incumbent fame and

powers lead the creature to get involved in deeds notwithstanding the denigrating result of such involvement upon the Atma. All deeds done under the delusion of 'I am a doer' creates the desire for enjoying the good effects or fruits or rewards of doing these deeds. This is like a spiritual bondage for the Atma of the creature. Even religious and noble deeds—such as observance of sacraments, performance of fire sacrifices, giving of donations and making charities, doing severe Tapa (i.e. penances and austerities) etc.—done with this erroneous notion that 'I have done this deed and therefore I am entitled to enjoy its fruit or reward' make them not the proper way of doing deeds. Though they are noble and righteous in their own right, they nevertheless have a detrimental affect upon the purity of the Atma which is supposed to remain detached and disassociated from these deeds. Therefore, instead of providing liberation and deliverance, they tie the Atma down (11-12).

ज्ञानमिति देहेन्द्रियनिग्रहसद्गुरुपासनश्रवणमनननिदिध्यासनैर्यद्यद्दृश्यस्वरूपं सर्वान्तरस्थं सर्वसमं  
घटपदादिपदार्थमिवाविकारं विकारेषु चैतन्यं विना किञ्चिन्नास्तीति साक्षात्कारानुभवो ज्ञानम् ।१३।।

jñānamiti dehendriyanigrahasadgurūpāsanaśravaṇamanananididhyāsa-  
nairyadyaddr̥gdr̥śyasvarūpaṁ sarvāntarasthaṁ sarvasamaṁ ghaṭapaṭādi-  
padārthamivāvikāraṁ vikāreṣu caitanyaṁ vinā kiñcinnāstīti sākṣātkārā-  
nubhavo jñānam // 13 //

13. The same unchangeable, immutable, steady and uniform essence called the pure consciousness is present in everything that exists in this ever changing world, in everything that changes every now and then alongside the temporary and transient world. The seer as well as the object that is seen is both that same consciousness personified. This is the paradox of creation—that the things that are ever changing, that are in a state of constant flux, that are volatile, that never remain stable and uniform—should have the same unchanging entity as their core identity, as their fundamental essence and their principal spirit.

Though the same principal and essence resides uniformly in all the individual entities, these appear to have myriad forms and shapes forming the vast multifarious cosmos. These entities show diversities and endless combinations in their physical appearances, characters, behaviours and external features, in their natures, habits, temperaments, moral standards and intellectual development. For example, the same earth is used to make different shapes and sizes of mud pots by the potter, and the same earth becomes known by these newer names. Similarly, the same person may wear different attires and each new set of clothes gives him a distinct appearance and personality. This awareness or enlightenment is called Gyan, or truthful knowledge, wisdom and erudition. This realisation leading to the experience of the basic truth is achieved or obtained by exercising control over the body and its sense organs, by serving one's learned teacher, by having devotion for him, by believing in his words and paying attention to them, by contemplating upon and deeply thinking over the meaning of his preaching, by comprehending and diligently implementing them in practice, and by constantly keeping in mind the implications of his teachings by repeatedly reminding oneself about them (13).



अज्ञानमिति च रज्जौ सर्पभ्रान्तिरिवाद्वितीये सर्वानुस्यूते सर्वमये ब्रह्मणि  
देवतिर्यङ्मनस्त्वावरस्त्रीपुरुषवर्णाश्रमबन्धमोक्षोपाधिनानात्मभेदकल्पितं ज्ञानमज्ञानम् ॥१४॥

ajñānamiti ca rajjau sarpabhrāntirivādviṭiye sarvānusyūte sarvamaye  
brahmaṇi devatiryaṇnarasthāvarastrīpuruṣavarṇāśramabandhamokṣo-  
pādhinānātmabhedakalpitaṁ jñānamajñānam // 14 //

14. Even as treating a lifeless and harmless length of rope as being a snake is the result of delusions and ignorance of the fact created by a hallucinating and ill-advised mind-intellect, to see ‘duality’ in this creation, or to distinguish between any two entities of this creation—despite the fact that the same supreme transcendental Brahm pervades uniformly and universally in the entire creation, be it in the form of the various Gods, birds, animals and humans, the inanimate and the animate things, a male or a female, the classifications of society into the different Varnas and Ashrams<sup>1</sup>, or in the concept of being free or being in a bondage etc.—is also due to ‘Agyan’, or ignorance and lack of truthful knowledge about the reality and fundamental truth. So, what appear on the surface is more often than not misleading, and not the correct and genuine thing. This is because the same Brahm lives in all the forms in which the world has manifested its self. So to distinguish between two things which have the same principle operating in them is fundamentally flawed, erroneous and fallacious; it is a misconception about the truth that has the opposite effect to that what is had by truthful knowledge

[This verse basically says that physical appearances are very deceptive. A man who takes things at face value, who decides the truth just by the external superficial things he sees, is making a grave error. For example, earth is moulded into various shapes and sizes by the potter—he crafts pots and toys from the same ingredient, the earth. An ordinary man would say that this is an earthen lamp, a mud pitcher, a clay doll, a toy horse, etc. while a wise man would say it is earth; it is clay in different forms.]

Similarly, a stupid man or a man who is deluded and does not know the truth would be scared stiff on seeing a length of rope in the dark, thinking it to be a snake. But even in the same darkness, another man who knows that it is simple, lifeless and harmless piece of ordinary rope will laugh at the panicked tantrums thrown by his stupid companion.

Therefore, in metaphysical terms, a wise and realised person is one who sees the same universal consciousness known as the Brahm in all that is visible around him. The innumerable contours and colours of the world would not at all change this basic truth for him. This Brahm has a gross body as the physical appearance of the world, and its fundamental essence that gives the world its worth, importance and significance, is the hidden Atma, the ‘pure self’ of each individual unit in this world. And incidentally, the wise man realises, that it is the same, immutable consciousness that resides in his own bosom as his Atma. This Atma is Brahm personified. This is called Gyan. Any other interpretation is categorised as Agyan.] (14).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Varans and Ashrams in society--(a) The four Varnas--The society has been divided into four sections or classes by ancient sages to regulate its functioning by delegation of authority and clearly specifying the jobs each section is supposed to do to maintain order and system in the world, to prevent overlapping of functions and avoid anarchy and chaos. These four sections are—(i) Brahmins—the learned and teaching class; they also presided over religious functions as priests, because these functions

were central to life in the Vedic period; (ii) Kshatriyas —they were the warrior, fighting, kingly class. They were assigned the job of giving protection to the society, dispensing justice and maintaining general law and order. (iii) Vaishyas —they were the trading and farming class responsible for commerce and wealth generation. They provided for the necessities for a comfortable life, and (iv) the Shudras —the service class of people whose main function was to free the other three classes from the humdrums of daily chores and concentrate their energies to the particular jobs assigned to those classes to which they belonged.

(b) The four Ashrams—The life of a man is divided into four segments or Ashrams—(a) Brahmacharya —this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style, (b) Grihastha —when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called Grihastha Ashram which is a householder life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life and dealings with this deceptive world with all their accompanying horrifying problems, (c) Vaanprastha —this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) Sanyas —this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation and begging for food, and single mindedly aiming for emancipation and salvation.

These four Ashrams, their characteristic features and virtues are described in detail in an Upanishad called ‘Ashramo-panishad’ belonging to the Atharva Veda tradition.]

सुखमिति च सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपं ज्ञात्वानन्दरूपा या स्थितिः सैव सुखम् ॥१५॥

sukhamiti ca saccidānandasvarūpaṁ jñātvānandarūpā yā sthitiḥ saiva  
sukham // 15 //

15. True ‘Sukha’, or genuine happiness, pleasure, comfort, welfare, joy, delight and true gratification, is the state of infinite blissfulness, contentedness and eternal peace that is obtained by acquisition of knowledge about the supreme Brahman who is a personification of truth, consciousness and bliss. This state is akin to realising the eternally blissful and conscious nature of the pure self which is known as the Atma (15).

[Note--This Atma is a true image of the supreme transcendental Brahman. This Atma is the consciousness that forms the ‘self’ of the creature. Once this realisation dawns upon the creature that he has a great lineage, a great heritage, a great ancestry, it fills him with a sense of greatness and majesty which not only removes his sense of

dejection at being humbled by delusions of the world and at being besieged by worldly sorrows, pains, torments and anguish, but inspires him to aim for that high goal of truth-realisation and acquisition of spiritual knowledge in life so that he reaches the stature befitting his exalted ancestry. He would not do anything that stains his exalted stature. This awareness also makes him happy and joyful in the sense that he forgets his pains and takes them in his stride. He realises that he belongs to a noble class of creatures and his pure self never suffers or perishes like the body does, because it is eternally blissful and imperishable.]

दुःखमिति अनात्मरूपो विषयसंकल्प एव दुःखम् ।१६॥

duḥkhamiti anātmārūpo viṣayasamkalpa eva duḥkham // 16 //

16. 'Dukha', or the feeling or notion of suffering, sorrow, pain, grief and anguish is due to the mind being diverted towards the objects of this deluding and transient world which are essentially perishable and illusionary in nature. This mind then gets enamoured by their charms, however illusionary they might be (just like getting deluded by the sight of water in a hot desert when one sees a mirage). This causes the mind to make so many vows and determinations regarding those objects; it makes so many resolves and creates so many aspirations in connection with them. The mind, once charmed and fascinated by these objects, tries to acquire them at any cost, resulting in the setting-off of a chain of events which rob the mind of its peace and tranquillity. The wise creature represented by his truthful identity called the Atma knows that this world is gross and illusionary, and that the objects that are part of this world are equally gross and illusionary, but this same creature is overcome by delusions which ignite ignorance in him and he begins to yearn for those same perishable things which his intellect has been warning him to be aware of. This situation is called 'Dukha'; this development causes innumerable problems for the creature and throws him in a swirling whirlpool of miseries and sorrows, leading to constant sufferings and grief (16).

[Note—Two opposing notions have been described in verse nos. 15 and 16. While 'Sukha' gives happiness and peace to the creature, 'Dukha' is a metaphor for all miseries from which he suffers. We will observe that a man who is aware of his Atma's exalted stature and the falsehood of the body and the world remains calm, peaceful and infinitely contented. On the other hand, a man who has just the opposite idea about who he is, i.e. who treats his body as his 'self' instead of the Atma, remains perpetually submerged in an ocean of miseries and sorrows. This is because he will have uncountable ambitions, hopes and expectations from his body which lives in this world and interacts with it, and it's just impossible to fulfil them all. Besides this, the body gradually becomes old and infirm; it suffers from numerous limitations, and can never be at peace with its self. So many of his expectations and hopes in life fail; so many of his aspirations and ambitions in life remain a distant dream. Relations and trusts are made, broken and betrayed. There is pain, agony and grief all around. So there is no scope of ever finding everlasting peace.

The contrast is sharp and obvious in these two cases of a creature's existence.]

स्वर्ग इति च सत्संसर्गः स्वर्गः । नरक इति च असत्संसारविषयजनसंसर्ग एव नरकः ।१७॥

svarga iti ca satsamsargaḥ svargaḥ / naraka iti ca asatsamsāra viṣaya-janasamsarga eva narakaḥ // 17 //

17. ‘Swarga’ or heaven is equivalent to an existence when one is fortunate enough to have contact and communion with the ‘truth’ which is possible only when one comes in contact with it. In other words, any situation where the ‘truth and reality’ exists, where it is discussed, where the life is totally submerged and soaked in it, where nothing except the truth prevails—that place or situation is akin to Swarga.

On the other hand, ‘Narka’ or hell is equivalent to having contact and dealings with that which is not the truth and reality. Therefore, to remain engrossed in the artificial and deluding objects of the perishable and deluding world which cause nothing but pain and sufferings, which create a trap for the Atma and bogs it down in the swamp of delusions and ignorance that in its wake lead the Atma to remain trapped in this tormenting world in an endless cycle of birth and death because of its deeds and their consequences, is called Narka (17).

बन्ध इति च अनाद्यविद्यावासनया जातोऽहमित्यादिसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥१८॥

bandha iti ca anādyavidyāvāsanayā jāto’hamityādisaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 18 //

18. ‘Bandhan’, or being tied in shackles, is the erroneous thought that the physical body is ‘My Self’, and it is ‘Me’. This thought that ‘I’ is the body which enjoys the world and its objects of sensual gratifications, that ‘I’ is anything other than the Atma, are due to ignorance which has a horary origin. This misconception arising from eternal ignorance and inherent delusions that are present in the gross world/creation right from its beginning is the cause of all fetters that tie the creature to this world because it erroneously thinks that this ‘I’ is its body and not the Atma. As is well established that the word ‘I’ is synonymous with ego and self pride, called Ahankar, and that this trait is demoting and detrimental for the soul’s elevation to a high pedestal, it is tantamount to putting a shackle upon the creature and tying it down to this world where the body lives. It blocks its spiritual progress and upliftment. This ignorance-induced shackle is called Bandhan (18).

पितृमातृसहोदरदारापत्यगृहारामक्षेत्रममतासंसारवरणसङ्कल्पो बन्धः ॥१९॥

pitṛmātr̥sahodaradārāpatyagr̥hārāmakṣetramamatāsamsārāvaraṇasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 19 //

19. The thought that these worldly relations such as the father, mother, brother and son, as well as the different assets or possessions such as the household, the field and the garden etc. belong to me is also another form of fetter that shackle the creature to this world. In fact, any notion of attachment or belonging to or possession of any thing pertaining to this mortal and artificial world is tantamount to being tied in shackles (19).

कर्तृत्वाद्यहंकारसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२०॥

kartṛtvādyahaṁkārasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 20 //

20. Another form of Bandhan or shackle/fetter is the notion that one has done a particular deed, that the deed's successful accomplishment was because of efforts made by me, that I am the one who has done the deed, and therefore I am the one who is entitled to its rewards or fruits. By extension it involves the desire to do more things and to make efforts to finish off those deeds that are yet unfinished; it creates an endless 'chain' of wishes, aspirations, ambitions, desires and yearnings. This 'chain' is the fetter that ties the creature down. So, the notion of being a 'doer of deeds' and the 'pride and ego' attendant with its successful accomplishment, and the desire to enhance this accomplishment or to finish off the unfinished task are all symbolic fetters that shackle the creature to the world.

[This is because this notion implies that the creature thinks that his body is his true identity, as it is the body that is doing the deed and not the Atma which is actually his truthful self vis-à-vis the body. This misconception in itself creates a mirage-like situation which traps the creature. And by saying 'traps the creature' it is implied that the 'Atma' is trapped because the latter is the truthful identity of the creature.] (20).

अणिमाद्यष्टैश्वर्याशासिद्धसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२१॥

*aṇimādyasṭaiśvaryāśāsiddhasaṃkalpo bandhaḥ // 21 //*

21. Another form of Bandhan or worldly shackle that ties the Atma down is having any desire or ambition to acquire the eight mystical powers called 'Siddhis', such as Anima<sup>1</sup> etc., which bestows a person with Aishwarya (i.e. that which gives him immense supernatural powers; that which bestows him with great worldly fame, opulence, majesty, supremacy and authority that comes with possession of great and mystical abilities and magical potentials; renown that comes with acquisition of divine faculties and powers associated with mysticism).

[This is because these mystical and esoteric powers help the creature to acquire worldly fame and name, which in their wake give him wealth, follower-ship, majesty, powers and authority which he then uses to enhance his stature and material well being in this world. For a true renunciate and detached person who has realised the futility of worldly pursuits there is no power and authority more attractive than the one called the Atma or the supreme transcendental Brahm. Such a realised person would utilise his energy for achieving more noble goals than frittering it away in acquiring those potentials that can give him only worldly fame and authority. Further, a true renunciate and enlightened person would like to remain in a secluded and calm place in order to contemplate and meditate upon the truth, and would not like any disturbance whatsoever, while all these mystical and divine powers that bestow great authority, glory, grandeur, glamour and supremacy, collectively called Aishwarya, make him much sought after by people who would like him to help them overcome their personal worldly problems.]

Hence, even the resolve to acquire these eight so-called 'Siddhis' or mystical powers is a form of shackle for the creature that would tie him down to the mundane world (21).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *eight Siddhis* are the following-- There are eight mystical powers or accomplishment called 'Siddhis'. They are the following— (i) 'Anima' means the power to become microscopic or so minute that one

becomes invisible to the naked eye; (ii) 'Mahima' is to have greatness, majesty, glory and fame; to be honoured and acknowledged for one's achievements, knowledge and skills; (iii) 'Garima' is to have weight, stature, dignity, decorum, gravity and significance, (iv) 'Laghima' is to have simplicity and humility; (v) 'Praapti' is to be able to attain or obtain anything wished or desired; (vi) 'Prakramya' is to have valour, ardour, strength, powers, prowess, potential and punch leading to triumph, glory and majesty; (vii) 'Ishwatwa' is to be able to have lordship or sway over others; and (viii) 'Vashitwa' is to be able to control and subdue others.]

देवमनुष्याद्युपासनाकामसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२२॥

devamanuṣyādyupāsanākāmasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 22 //

22. Worshipping, offering obeisance and praying to Gods as well as singing the laurels of and lavishing praises on humans, flattering them, pleading with them and appeasing them in order to fulfil one's worldly desires, and requesting their intercession for worldly gains and accomplishments in any endeavour, are also equivalent to being shackled or getting tied (because these undermine one's self respect and the dignity of the pure conscious 'self' which is the supreme Brahm personified as one's Atma; further these pleadings make one subservient to these Gods and humans, and makes one feel obliged to them and come under their obligations which robs the independence of the creature) (22).

यमाद्यष्टाङ्गयोगसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२३॥

yamādyasṭāṅgayogasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 23 //

23. Another form of Bandhan or getting tied or being shackled is to resolve to follow the eight-fold path of Yoga (consisting of Yam, Niyam, Asan, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharna, Dhyān and Samadhi) (23).

[Note—The *eight-fold path of Yoga*-- According to Patanjali who is considered to be the greatest exponent of Yoga, the latter consists of the following eight-fold paths— (1) 'Yam' or self restraint; (2) 'Niyam' or observance of certain sacrosanct rules; (3) 'Aasan' or postures for meditation; (4) 'Pranyam' or breath control exercises for purification of the body and mind; (5) 'Pratyahar' or withdrawal of the mind and its control; (6) 'Dhaarna' or having a firm conviction, faith and belief on the sanctity and truthfulness of the chosen path; fixed attention; (7) 'Dhyān' or contemplation and concentration of the faculties of the mind and intellect; continuous meditation; and (8) 'Samadhi' or a state in which the aspirant loses all awareness of the external world and even himself, and remains perpetually in meditation.]

वर्णाश्रमधर्मकर्मसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२४॥

varṇāśramadharmakarmasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 24 //

24. Bandhan or being shackled and tied also takes the form of being too obsessed with observance of the rules and codes of conduct as prescribed for various Varnas (classes in society) and Ashrams (the phases into which the life of a Hindu was divided by ancient sages) (24).

[Note—The four *Varnas* and the four *Ashrams* have been described as a note to verse no. 14 above.]

आज्ञाभयसंशयात्मगुणसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२५॥

ājñābhayaśaṃśayātmaguṇasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 25 //

25. To have fears, to endeavour to follow orders and be obedient, and to have doubts and confusions, traits that are integral to all the living creatures that have an Atma, are also one of the various forms of Bandhans or getting tied and shackled (25).

यागव्रततपोदानविधिविधानज्ञानसंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२६॥

yāgavratatapodānavidhividhānājñānasaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 26 //

26. To be very diligent and too obsessed about doing various righteous and auspicious deeds as required by religious doctrines, such as Yagya (religious sacrifices and rituals), Vrat (observing fasting and other religious vows), Tapa (austerities and penances) and Daan (making charities and giving donations), as well as endeavouring to acquire Gyan (truthful knowledge as contained in the scriptures by studying them)—all these activities also lead the creature to be tied in fetters, or falling in a Bandhan (26).

[Note—It should be noted that this verse as well as previous verse no. 23 and 24 do not mean that one should not observe these rules, that one should not do Yoga or make charities or follow the tenets of Varans and Ashrams or do sacrifices. They are not intended to make a man reckless and wayward, and nullify what has been preached by the scriptures and ancient sages and seers by ridiculing them. Instead, they mean that since the main aim of all these observances is to realise the ultimate Truth which is Brahm through the medium of self-realisation of the Atma of the individual creature, because it is easier to do it as the Atma is residing in the creature's own bosom and it does not have to search it elsewhere, once this aim is achieved then it is useless and waste of time and energy in going over these steps over and over again once the spiritual citadel is achieved. It must be remembered that all these are stepping stones to higher spiritualism and true liberation from the shackles that tie the soul down, and therefore they are not meant to be insulted and demeaned in anyway whatsoever.]

केवलमोक्षापेक्षासंकल्पो बन्धः ॥२७॥

kevalamokṣāpekṣāsaṅkalpo bandhaḥ // 27 //

27. In the same vein, even the desire to have Moksha, or liberation and deliverance, is also a form of Bandhan or shackle (because then a man becomes obsessed with doing

such deeds and taking such actions which would pave the path for his obtaining Moksha, but each of these deeds and actions would create their own sequence of consequences that might adversely effect his overall spiritual liberation and deliverance, for no action can ever remain free from a counter reaction) (27).

संकल्पमात्रसंभवो बन्धः ॥२८॥

samkalpamātrasambhavo bandhaḥ // 28 //

28. Verily indeed, the fact is that having any kind of Sankalp (volition, ambition, aspiration, determination, vows etc.) is one or the other form of Bandhan or shackle that tie the creature (for the same reason as pointed out in verse no. 27 above) (28).

मोक्ष इति च नित्यानित्यवस्तुविचारादनित्यसंसारसुखदुःख विषयसमस्तक्षेत्र ममताबन्धक्षयो मोक्षः ॥२९॥

mokṣa iti ca nityānityavastuvicārādanityasamsārasukhaduḥkha viṣaya-samastakṣetra mamatābandhakṣayo mokṣaḥ // 29 //

29. When a person is able to overcome and free himself from the charming but deluding allurements of all the material sense objects and things of this enticing world which is basically perishable, transient and temporary by nature—whether the object of his fascination is unstable, perishable and transient (such as the comforts provided by the company of a woman and possession of material wealth as well as a healthy body and happy household) or appears to be stable, long-lasting and enduring (such as good name and fame, various skills and knowledge, the auspicious long term effects of noble deeds and righteous actions)—he is deemed to have obtained the exalted state of existence called ‘Moksha’ when he is freed from the fetters created by this world and its traps.

Similarly, when a person is successful in understanding the nature of the illusionary charms proffered by this material world by pondering deeply into their essential nature and form, when he is able to eliminate his attachments and endearments with all of them—whether they provide him with Sukha (happiness and comforts, joys and pleasures) or Dukha (sorrows, sufferings, pains and miseries)—i.e. when he becomes totally disassociated with the world and becomes a genuine renunciate par-excellence, it is only then that he is deemed to have reached the exalted state of ‘Moksha’, or has achieved liberation and deliverance from all shackles that tie an ignorant and deluded man to this world of myriad entrapments (29).

उपास्य इति च सर्वशरीरस्थचैतन्यब्रह्मप्रापको गुरुपास्यः ॥३०॥

upāśya iti ca sarvaśarīrasthacaitanyabrahmaprāpako gururupāśyaḥ // 30 //

30. Only a true and self-realised Guru<sup>1</sup> (moral preceptor; teacher and guide) who is able to advise the disciple, inspire him and guide him on how to access that supreme



Brahm who resides in the body of all the creatures of this creation as their pure consciousness, is worthy of worshipping, honouring and admiring. [He is the only one who is worthy of keeping company with and to sit with. See verse no. 17 in this context.] (30).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>A *Guru*—the word ‘Guru’ has two parts—viz. ‘Gu’ meaning darkness, and ‘Ru’ meaning light. Hence the combined word indicates a person who can remove the darkness of ignorance of his follower by showing him the light of knowledge. He is the one who is expected to have risen above self vested interests and keeps the welfare of the disciple as his main objective. He is the one who has transcended the mundane and has acquired sublime awareness of the supreme Reality, because only those who are themselves aware of anything can hope to tell others about it. A true Guru is treated as being equivalent to the ‘Trinity Gods’—(1) Brahma, the creator, because he creates or helps to take birth good virtues and noble qualities in his disciple; (2) Vishnu, the sustainer, because he nourishes, sustains and helps to inculcate and develop wisdom and enlightenment in his disciple and leads him on the truthful path; and (3) Shiva, the concluder, because he helps to end, conclude and eliminate ignorance and negative traits in his disciple. He is ‘God like’ because he functions in all these capacities at the same time, besides being exalted in all knowledge, being virtuous, of high moral character and beyond reproach, being a source of unbound spiritual energy, being self realised and enlightened, and being eternal in the sense that what he advises to his disciple, the path he shows, the light that he lights in the dark heart of the creature, makes him immortal. Therefore, a Guru is honoured for the divine virtues that he represents and embodies, that he teaches and implements in his life, for the divinity, for the Lord and for the personification of the great teachings of the scriptures that he exemplifies. It is not his physical body that is of any value for veneration, for the soul and not the body is venerable.

There is a minor Upanishad called ‘Dwayo-panishad’ which describes the chief characteristics of a true Guru. It has only seven Mantras. This Upanishad is being cited here verse by verse to clearly highlight the main features of a Guru:---(a) Verse nos.1-2= A person is called a Guru if he is endowed with enlightenment and wisdom making him well versed and skilled in the Vedas, both in their literal knowledge as well as in the profound wisdom and the ethereal and eclectic metaphysical and spiritual philosophy they contain, who is an ardent devotee and sincere follower of Lord Vishnu, who is free from such negative traits as jealousy, envy and malice, who is well versed and skilled in the various holy and divine Mantras, their usage, their ethereal importance and spiritual significance as well as all other matters related with them, who is sincerity devoted to those Mantras and has firm belief, conviction and faith in them, who seeks the shelter and refuge of those Mantras, who is pure and immaculate, uncorrupt and unpolluted in any form, who is devoted and dedicated to his own Guru, and who is well versed and skilled not only in all the Purans but all other scriptures as well.

(b) Verse no.3= A person is called a Guru who has a comprehensive and holistic knowledge and understanding of all the scriptures, and who not only preaches righteousness, probity and propriety as well as nobility of thoughts and actions but also lives them and implements them in their letter and spirit in his personal life.

(c) Verse no. 4= The letter ‘Gu’ means darkness, while the letter ‘Ru’ means that which remove that darkness. Hence, Guru is one who removes the darkness representing ignorance and delusions that are so typically associated with this deluding world.

(d) Verse no.5= A true Guru is equivalent to the supreme and transcendental Brahm; he is the ultimate destination for a seeker; he is a fount of the supreme knowledge and the source of the best of such knowledge; he is deemed to be the best and the greatest asset for a man.

(e) Verse no.6= A Guru is the best thing a wise seeker seeks and searches for, he is the best and the supreme place for seeking refuge and shelter with, and he being a dispenser of the profoundest of wisdom and knowledge is deemed to be a person who is the most important, who has the highest standards of greatness and magnificence, who is most dignified and meritorious, who is most weighty and significant, and who is most distinct and outstanding in all aspects.

(f) Verse no.7= Pronouncing the word 'Guru' even once enables the aspirant to access liberation and deliverance from this entrapping and deluding world. All his efforts are deemed to have been successful by simply saying this powerful word sincerely. Such a man does never come back (enters the cycle of birth and death) in this world again—verily, this is the truth. Those who understand this fact correctly get the desired fruit'.]

शिष्य इति च विद्याध्वस्तप्रपञ्चावगाहितज्ञानावशिष्टं ब्रह्मैव शिष्यः ॥३१॥

śiṣya iti ca vidyādhvastaprapañcāvagāhitajñānāvaśiṣṭaṁ brahmaiva śiṣyaḥ // 31 //

31. A true disciple is one in whose heart or bosom only the eclectic and sublime knowledge of the supreme transcendental Brahm remains after thorough investigation, examination and understanding of the actual nature of the mundane, artificial, temporary and mortal world. This has created a strong and sincere sense of renunciation in him accompanied by the kindling of enlightenment. Such a disciple has applied Gyan (rational mind and analytical thoughts laced with erudition and wisdom to arrive at the factual truth about what is real and what is imaginary) to determine the falsehood of the world and its objects, and this knowledge has inspired him to concentrate upon the factual thing represented by the truthful Brahm, which is consciousness and truth personified, and which resides in the heart of the disciple as his Atma. In other words, a true disciple is one who has no confusions about what is true and what is false; he would not be led astray by false charms created by the deluding effects of this artificial and entrapping world, and instead strive to constantly focus his attention on the truthful path of self-realisation (31).

विद्वानिति च सर्वान्तरस्थस्वसंविद्रूपविद्विद्वान् ॥३२॥

vidvāniti ca sarvāntarasthasvasaṁvidrūpavidvidvān // 32 //

32. A 'Vidwan', or an expert, a scholar, an erudite and sagacious person who is deemed to be a wise and learned one is he who knows the holistic truth and reality about the holy, sublime, ethereal and eclectic form of the essential element called Atma that resides in the heart of all the creatures. He is aware of its enlightened and supreme form and nature. He has that penetrating insight that enables him to see and realise that the same divine principle known as the Atma that resides in his own bosom also resides uniformly and universally in the heart of all the other creatures in this creation. This realisation in him is not based on hypothesis but on proper and logical understanding and personal experience, on research and analysis, on erudition and wisdom, on deep pondering and meditation, on scientific exploration and examination of all available proofs and data (32).

मूढ इति च कर्तृत्वाद्यहंकारभावारूढो मूढः ॥३३॥

mūḍha iti ca kartṛtvādyahamkārabhāvārūḍho mūḍhaḥ // 33 //

33. A 'Moodh' (mūḍha), or a dumb-witted, stupid and foolish person, a person of low intellect, is defined as one who is firmly grouted in ignorant views about the concept of deeds and pride. That is, a person who erroneously thinks that 'he' is the one who is doing certain deed, and that he is 'proud' of his deeds and their results, is deemed to be an ignorant fool. This is because he is unaware that 'his' true self is the Atma and not the body that is actually doing any deed, and to have pride for something not done is indeed foolish and a stupid proposition (33).

आसुरमिति च ब्रह्मविष्णुवीशानेन्द्रादीनामैश्वर्यकामनया निरशनजपाग्निहोत्रादिष्वन्तरात्मानं संतापयति चात्युग्ररागद्वेषविहिंसाम्भाद्यपेक्षितं तप आसुरम् ॥३४॥

āsuramiti ca brahmaviṣṇuviśānendrādīnāmaīśvāryakāmanayā niraśanajapāgnihoṭrādīṣvantarātmānaṁ santāpayati cātyugrarāgadveṣavihiṁsādambhādyapekṣitaṁ tapa āsuram // 34 //

34. That Tapa (doing penances, observing austerities and undergoing sufferance) which is done with the desire to acquire the majesty, fame, glory, powers, potentials and authority that are possessed by Gods such as Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the sustainer), Ishan (Lord Shiva; the concluder), Indra (the king of Gods) and other such divine Gods, is called 'Asura Tapa', or the demonic, unrighteous, inauspicious and improper form of Tapa.

Similarly, that Tapa which is done with malefic intentions to harm others when one is severely angry and wrathful at them, that Tapa which is done with jealousy and hatred towards anyone, that Tapa which is done with the intention of causing violence and pain to others, that Tapa which is done with deceit and a sense of false pride and numerous other such negative thoughts and notions are all called non-righteous forms of Tapa or the demonic form of Tapa called 'Asura Tapa'.

Not only Tapa, but any other sacrament or religious ritual such as observance of Vrat (fasting and making and keeping of vows), Yagya (fire sacrifices and other religious ceremonies) that are done with these above enumerated faults are deemed to be unholy and unrighteous. They are all demonic (34).

[Note—This type of hard penance and austerity is called 'Asura' because it does not serve the purpose of any spiritual welfare of the aspirant. At the most it can bless him with the acquisition of the greatest of powers, authorities and majesties that are obtainable in this world, but they will only give him worldly name, fame, pomp and grandeur. They would act as a 'golden chain' that tie his Atma/soul to the world, but would not help to 'break' the chain. Success in such Tapa bring such worldly blessings in their wake that the creature is swept away by their accompanying charms and pomp, but in the process he is uprooted from his own foundation and tossed around like a piece of wood on the surface of the ocean. These Tapas serve only a deluded Atma's vested interest, but never the genuine interest of an enlightened Atma.]

तप इति च ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्येत्यपरोक्षज्ञानाग्निना । ब्रह्माद्यैश्वर्याशासिद्धसङ्कल्पबीजसन्तापं तपः  
॥३५॥

tapa iti ca brahma satyaṃ jaganmithyetyaparokṣajñānāgninā brahmā-  
dyaishvaryaśāsiddhasaṅkalpabījasantāpaṃ tapaḥ // 35 //

35. Real and truthful form of Tapa (austerity, penance and sufferance which is considered holy, auspicious and righteous) is that in which a person acquires sufficient clarity of thought, level of wisdom and deep insight that enlightens him to realise the fact that Brahm is the ultimate, genuine, immutable and irrefutable Truth, while the rest of the world is false and illusionary. With the aid of this eclectic erudition and robust wisdom, he burns his desires to acquire such 'Aishwarya' that would empower him with stupendous powers and potentials which are equivalent to those possessed by Brahma the creator and the rest of the Gods. [In other words, he is filled with the light of enlightenment that makes him disillusioned with the false charms of the world and the false praises and honours that comes to those who possess supernatural powers, because these powers and potentials can give him worldly fame and authority but they would never help him attain true liberation and deliverance; they would never help him with his quest for emancipation and salvation. On the other hand, yearning for obtaining Aishwarya would tie his soul to an endless cycle of wants and more wants, because with each successful worldly accomplishment the person would endeavour to acquire the next better one as he would have tasted the sweetness of success as well as the worldly benefits that accrue with acquisition of wealth, majesty, authority, supremacy and opulence that are natural to such accomplishments.]

In fact, true and auspicious Tapa is dedicated to realisation of the true self, and is marked by great humility, renunciation and enlightenment with their accompanying liberation from the fetters of all kinds that shackle a creature to anything that has the remotest link with this world of wants and desires, even if these relate to acquiring divine and mystical powers called Aishwarya.

[Say, what power is more powerful and majestic and authoritative than Brahm! So, why should one fritter away precious time and energy to pursue lesser goals when he has the opportunity to pursue higher goals? Therefore, true Tapa is when the desire to acquire God-like authority and powers that would give worldly fame and majesty are totally annihilated. Instead, true Tapa is one which kindles self-realisation which helps the man to burn everything that is false and deluding and denigrating for his Atma/soul, and which paves the way for his spiritual liberation and deliverance. This Tapa is like the fire which burns the rope that has bound the man to a vast array of delusions and falsehoods.] (35).

परमं पदमिति च प्राणेन्द्रियाद्यन्तः करणगुणादेः । परतरं सच्चिदानन्दमयं नित्यमुक्तब्रह्मस्थानं परमं पदम्  
॥३६॥

paramaṃ padamiti ca prāṇendriyādyantaḥkaraṇaguṇādeḥ parataraṃ  
saccidānandamayam nityamuktabrahmasthanam paramaṃ padam // 36 //

36. The supreme transcendental residence or abode of Brahm is called ‘Param Pad’. It is the most exalted, the highest and the best stature that a creature can expect to achieve in his spiritual quest for excellence and immortality. This abode of Brahm is beyond the realm where Pran (the life giving vital wind called breath along with the other vital winds), Indris (the organs of the gross body), Anthakaran (the subtle body; the mind and intellect and heart) etc. have their existence. That abode is inhabited by the eternally blissful, eternally conscious and eternally liberated entity known as the supreme Brahm (36).

[Note—According to the philosophy of Vedanta, there are three types of bodies of a creature—the gross body consisting of the various sense organs of actions and perceptions, the subtle body consisting of the mind and intellect, and the causal body in which the Atma resides surrounded by the bliss sheath. This Atma is a micro level embodiment of Brahm; the latter resides in the individual creature as its Atma. So, realisation of Brahm is equivalent to realising the true nature and form of the ‘self’. This realisation is the culmination of all spiritual endeavours, including the Tapa mentioned in verse no. 35. It is like reaching the citadel where the great Truth lies; it is the stature that is most exalted and revered.]

ग्राह्यमिति च देशकालवस्तुपरिच्छेदराहित्यचिन्मात्रस्वरूपं ग्राह्यम् ॥३७॥

grāhyamiticadeśakālavastuparicchedarāhityacinmātrasvarūpaṃ grāhyam // 37 //

37. That which is beyond the physical limitations of geography, time, circumstance and physical forces of nature, that which is an embodiment of pure consciousness, that which is the essence and truth is the only thing that is eligible for and worthy of being accepted and welcomed. [That entity is indeed the supreme Brahm; the rest is all impertinent and false, perishable and irrelevant.] (37).

अग्राह्यमिति च स्वस्वरूपव्यतिरिक्तमायामयबुद्धीन्द्रियगोचरजगत्सत्यत्वचिन्तनमग्राह्यम् ॥३८॥

agrāhyamiti ca svasvarūpavyatirikta māyāmayabuddhīndriyagocarajagat-satyatvacintanamagrāhyam // 38 //

38. That which is not the truth is not an image of the truthful form of the ‘self’ which is pure consciousness, enlightened, eternal, imperishable and blissful, that which is created by Maya (delusions, ignorance and imaginations) is not worthy of accepting or welcoming. Any thought of this world by the mind and intellect, the world which is reached or accessed by the organs of the body, is definitely not acceptable (because it has its genesis in falsehood as it is the creation of the mind; it is perishable; it is entrapping with all its delusions and illusionary charms just like the mirage of a desert; it is sought by the organs of the body which is itself gross and perishable; it is painful and tormenting in the sense that it traps the creature in an endless oscillating cycle of sorrows and joys; it never gives it rest and peace).

[That is, a wise creature should abhor such a world marked by falsehoods created by Maya; the creature should not think and pursue that which is not the truth like its own self which is ‘truth personified’ in the sense that the ‘self’ is pure consciousness and the ‘soul’, or the essence and spirit of the very existence of

creation. In other words, a wise man is one who would not accept the deceptive charms and attractions of the world as true, and therefore would not be tempted to get hooked to them. He would know that it is like pursuing a desert mirage in search of water. He can never find true happiness, peace and rest in this material world created by Maya. These virtues are to be found when one turns inwards, becomes contemplative and introspective.] (38).

संन्यासीति च सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य निर्ममो निरहंकारो भूत्वा ब्रह्मेष्टंशरणमुपगम्यं तत्त्वमसि अहं ब्रह्मास्मि  
सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किंचनेत्यादिमहावाक्यार्थानुभवज्ञानाद् ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीति निश्चत्य  
निर्विकल्पसमाधिना स्वतन्त्रो यतिश्चरति स संन्यासी स मुक्तः स पूज्यः स योगी स परमहंसः  
सोऽवधूतः स ब्राह्मण इति ॥३९॥

saṁnyāsīti ca sarvadharmānparityajya nirmamo nirahaṁkāro bhūtvā  
brahmeṣṭaṁ śaraṇamupagamya tattvamasi ahaṁ brahmāsmi sarvaṁ  
khalvidaṁ brahma neha nānāsti kiñcanetyādimahāvākyaṁrthānubhavajñānād  
brahmaivāhamasmīti niścitya nirvikalpasamādhinā svatanthro yatiścarati sa  
saṁnyāsī sa muktaḥ sa pūjyaḥ sa yogī sa paramahaṁsaḥ so'vadhūtaḥ sa  
brāhmaṇa iti // 39 //

39. [The characteristics of a true Sanyasi, or a renunciate hermit, are being described in this verse.] Those who forsake all sense of 'Ahankar' (pride and ego; arrogance and haughtiness) and 'Mamta' (endearments, affections, attachments, greed and obsession) with all types of 'Dharmas' (doing righteous duties and assigned tasks that a person is supposed to do according to the class of society to which he belongs, called his Varna, or to the particular phase of life through which he is passing, called his Ashram)<sup>1</sup> and instead seek the shelter of their chosen deity, which in this case is none other than Brahm, those who are firmly convinced about and firmly believe in the truthfulness of the great sayings of the scriptures—such as, inter alia, 'You are that', 'I am Brahm', 'All that is here is certainly Brahm', 'There is nothing besides Brahm' etc.—which lead to their being firmly established in the conviction that 'I am Brahm', (which implies that the person has realised that he is not an ordinary creature but an image of the Supreme Being himself).

Such self-realised and enlightened persons are the ones who achieve the blissful state obtained during the perpetual state of Samadhi which is a trance-like state of consciousness where the creature lives in the material world but remains totally oblivious of it, and instead remains submerged in the bliss of realisation of his true self which is pure conscious and bliss personified. This state of perpetual blissfulness is called 'Nirvikalp Samadhi', literally meaning the state of meditative trance which has no parallel, and where all doubts and confusions about the 'truth' and the 'self' are completely obliterated. This Samadhi gives the aspirant eternal peace and happiness as compared to ordinary Samadhi which lasts for a limited period.

Verily, such a man is called a 'Yati' or an ascetic par-excellence; he is called a Sanyasi or a renunciate hermit. It is only such a person who is deemed to be liberated and delivered, is considered worthy of worship, adoration, admiration, honour, respect and reverence, is called a Yogi (one who practices meditation and contemplation), is called a Param Hans (a senior Sanyasi who is like a swan which chooses the best and leaves what is not the best; considered the wisest bird), is called an Avadhut (the best

form of Sanyasi who has totally forsaken all formalities associated with the world and even those that are considered religious duties such as observance of sacraments, doing penances and austerities, keeping fasts, taking ritualistic bath, offering regular prayers etc.), and is a true Brahmin (a learned and wise person; a respected and honourable person; an elderly one who is sought by others for his knowledge, wisdom and his ability to provide moral and spiritual guidance) (39).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>When a man does some noble deed and performs his religious duties diligently, called his *Dharma*, he inculcates some sort of hidden pride or pleasure in being a noble man who does good and auspicious deeds according to prescribed ways, and lives an exemplary life by the rule book. This in turn creates in him a hidden desire to keep on going with his good deeds so as to enhance their potentials and quality etc. It indirectly involves certain degree of fear of a bad name and punishment if he fails to do these auspicious deeds expected of him. Further, these good deeds are bound to produce good effects which would naturally create a sense of endearment and affection for them in the heart of the man; he would naturally be attracted by and towards them. Therefore he would be mentally shackled to those deeds which he would prefer to call his 'Dharma', and keep his body engaged in doing them. The success and fame and powers and authority that 'Dharma' brings in its wake fills a man with pride and ego; it makes him arrogant and haughty. That is, he is overcome with 'Ahankar'. He thinks that he is better than other people as he is pursuing 'Dharma'. The taste of success makes him yearn for greater 'Dharma', and this creates a sense of more desires, wants, yearnings, endearments, obsessions and attachments to those things that bring glory to him. That is, he is overcome with 'Mamta'. Since this Upanishad emphasises that any type of Ahankar or Mamta are undesirable and unacceptable for a spiritual aspirant seeking communion with Brahm, even the Dharma proves detrimental to his liberation and deliverance as is very clear in earlier verses also. It is stressed here that true form of renunciation is forsaking all forms of formalities, including Dharma.]

इदं निरालम्बोपनिषदं योऽधीते गुर्वनुग्रहतः सोऽग्निपूतो भवति स वायुपूतो भवति न स पुनरावर्तते न स पुनरावर्तते पुनर्नाभिजायते पुनर्नाभिजायत इत्युपनिषत् ॥४०॥

idaṃ nirālambopaniṣadam yodhīte gurvanugrahataḥ so'gnipūto bhavati sa vāyupūto bhavati na sa punarāvartate na sa punarāvartate punarnābhijāyate punarnābhijāyata ityupaniṣat // 40 //

40. Any seeker or spiritual aspirant who diligently studies this Upanishad called Niralambo-panishad with due attention, deep concentration and proper understanding, then by the grace and blessings of his Guru (moral preceptor and guide) he becomes equivalent in stature to the son of the Fire God and the Wind God (i.e. he becomes as radiant, as glorious, as majestic, as important and as powerful and potent as if he was the son of the Fire God or the Wind God). Being the attained one, being the realised one, being the enlightened one who has risen above the mundane and who has conquered ignorance, he does not have to take birth again in this mortal world (i.e. he is freed from the cycle of transmigration). This is the magnificently beautiful truth expounded by this Upanishad. Amen! (40).

### (3.5) Bhikshuk Upanishad:

This Upanishad is very brief, having only four short verses and one bigger verse. It basically deals with the characteristic features, virtues and way of life of wandering friars or monks who have completely renounced their attachments with the materialistic world and roam about freely for the dual purpose of the general welfare of the society which gains by their communion, as well as for the lifting of their own self from a mere mundane existence to that which is spiritually exalted and elevating for their soul. Such people are called Sanyasis.

॥ भिक्षुकोपनिषद् ॥

ॐ अथ भिक्षूणां मोक्षार्थिनां कुटीचकबहूदकहंसपरमहंसाश्चेति चत्वारः ॥१॥

om atha bhikṣūṇāṃ mokṣārthināṃ  
kuṭīcakabahūdakahamsaparamahamsāśceti catvāraḥ // 1 //

1. OM salutations! Those ‘Bhikshuks’, literally those who beg for food and roam about as friars, monks or mendicants, who aspire for emancipation and salvation of their souls have four basic categories—Kutichak, Bhaudak, Hansa and Paramhans (1).

कुटीचका नाम गौतमभरद्वाजयाज्ञवल्क्यवसिष्ठप्रभृतयोऽष्टौ ग्रासांश्चरन्तो योगमार्गे मोक्षमेव प्रार्थयन्ते ॥२॥

kuṭīcakā nāma gautamabharadwājayājñavalkyavasiṣṭhprabhṛtayo’ṣṭau  
grāsāṃścaranto yogamāрге mokṣameva prārthayante // 2 //

2. The ‘Kutichak’ Bhikshuk takes only eight morsels of food<sup>1</sup> (or eight mouthfuls) and follows the path of Yoga<sup>2</sup> (i.e. the path of meditation and contemplation) to attain ‘Moksha’ (i.e. emancipation and salvation for their soul). Some examples of such Bhikshuks are—sages Gautam, Bharadwaj, Yagyavalkya and Vashistha (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This verse says that these Kutichak Sanyasis should take *eight morsels of food*. There is a lot of symbolism here—each morsel of food stands for one path; even as these eight paths of Yoga are self-sufficient for providing complete liberation and ensure deliverance of the aspirant’s soul from the traps in which it finds itself in this body living in a material world of delusions and sufferings, these eight morsels of food would sustain the aspirant in his spiritual pursuits.

It is not that a man should starve himself to death for want of food if mere eight morsels are not sufficient enough to sustain his body, for it has been elaborately explained in Chandogya Upanishad, canto 6, section 7, which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition, that the body needs sufficient food and energy to sustain itself and enable it to do its duty, one of them being to bear the Atma comfortably



during its journey through this world, a journey destined for the Atma due to its past deeds. So the eight morsels (mouthfuls) of food symbolise the fact that a true monk and renunciate is one who treats food as a way to sustain his body so that it can help the Atma to pass the test of renunciation, to get the chance of atoning for its past misdeeds, and to prepare for its own emancipation and salvation by symbolically implementing the eight-fold path of Yoga by disciplining the body rather than to torture it and cause it undue suffering. Therefore, if the Sanyasi finds that mere eight morsels of food is not enough to make him sustain his body, he might consider taking in some extra food, but just enough the amount that is absolutely essential. Besides this, the restriction of eight morsels is to inculcate the habit of self restraint, self control and non indulgence in food. A monk or friar is not expected to put on weight and become lethargic due to excessive intake of rich food.

<sup>2</sup>The word *Yoga* has a broad ramification. Besides its conventional meaning of contemplation and meditation, it also implies the various paths that bring about a union between the creature and the Supreme Being or Brahm. These paths lead to spiritual enhancement of the aspirant and help in his emancipation and salvation.

The eight-fold path of Yoga is the following—According to Patanjali who is considered to be the greatest exponent of Yoga, the latter consists of 8-fold path. These are briefly the following—(1) ‘Yam’ or self restraint; (2) ‘Niyam’ or observance of certain sacrosanct rules; (3) ‘Aasan’ or postures for meditation; (4) ‘Pranyaam’ or breath control exercises for purification of the body and mind; (5) ‘Pratyaaahar’ or withdrawal of the mind and its control; (6) ‘Dhaarna’ or having a firm conviction, faith and belief on the sanctity and truthfulness of the chosen path; (7) ‘Dhyan’ or contemplation and concentration of the faculties of the mind and intellect; and (8) ‘Samaadhi’ or a state in which the aspirant loses all awareness of the external world and even himself, and remains perpetually in meditation. In the present context, the Sanyasi must understand that each mouthful of food that he is taking must be used for the progress of his spirit on one of these paths of Yoga, and thereby come so much the closer to the supreme Brahm.]

अथ बहूदका नाम त्रिदण्डकमण्डलुशिखायज्ञोपवीतकाषायवस्त्रधारिणो ब्रह्मर्षिगृहे मधुमांसं वर्जयित्वाऽष्टौ  
ग्रासान्भैक्षाचरणं कृत्वा योगमार्गे मोक्षमेव प्रार्थयन्ते ॥३॥

atha bahūdakā nāma tridaṇḍakamaṇḍaluśikhāyajñopavītakāṣāyavastra-  
dhāriṇo brahmarṣiḡrhe madhumāṃsaṃ varjayitvāṣṭau grāsānbhaikṣā-  
caraṇaṃ kṛtvā yogamārge mokṣameva prārthayante // 3 //

3. The ‘Bahudak’ Bhikshuk holds a ‘Tridand’, a thin bamboo staff carried by a Sanyasi which has two other short pieces of wood, each measuring about four fingers in width, tied at the top end; it derives its name from the three controls that a true Sanyasi is supposed to observe—viz. control over his speech called the Vaag-dand, control over his body called the Kaye-dand and control over his mind called the Mana-dand), carries a water pot called the ‘Kamandalu’, sports a tuft of hair called the ‘Shiksha’ on his head (i.e. on the cranium), wears the sacred thread called the ‘Yagyopavit’ as well as ochre clothes called ‘Kashaya Vastra’.

They abstain from eating honey and meat, but except these two things, they accept any other type of food from the household of a person who is himself wise and exalted, well versed in the knowledge of Brahm, and is as noble as any other sage. [That is, the Sanyasi should not accept food from the house of those people who are known sinners and perverts.] He accepts only eight morsels of food and searches for Moksha (emancipation and salvation for his soul) (3).

अथ हंसा नाम ग्राम एकरात्रं नगरे पञ्चरात्रं क्षेत्रे सप्तरात्रं तदुपरि न वसेयुः । गोमूत्रगोमयाहारिणो नित्यं चान्द्रायणपरायणा योगमार्गे मोक्षमेव प्रार्थयन्ते ॥४॥

atha haṁsā nāma grāma ekarātram nagare pañcarātram kṣetre saptarātram tadupari na vaseyuḥ / gomūtragomayāhāriṇo nityaṁ cāndrāyaṇaparāyaṇā yogamārge mokṣameva prārthayante // 4 //

4. A Bhikshuk called ‘Hans’<sup>1</sup> does not stay for more than one night in a village, five nights in a city or town, and seven nights at any pilgrim site. They symbolically partake as food cow’s dung and drink cow’s urine<sup>2</sup> to purify themselves.

They roam about adopting the vow called ‘Chandrayan’<sup>3</sup>, and diligently follow the path of Yoga in search of Moksha (emancipation and salvation for his soul) (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The ‘*Swan or Hans*’ is considered the most pure, clean, wise, erudite and clever among the birds. It is said to eat pearls, which means it picks up and accepts only the best amid the variety of things available to it in the form of an assortment of various gems and jewels. It is also reputed to drink milk leaving aside the water content in it. It is also the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati, the patron Goddess of knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, speech and learning. Hence, the reference to a swan while describing a creature conscious of the vital wind or Pran passing through him means the basic, inherent and intrinsic tendency of that wisened and intelligent creature is to be the best, most pure and divine, wise, awakened and enlightened, adroit, clever and sagacious like the swan, and pick all the goodness and forsake all that is bad in this world. Saraswati rides on a swan, symbolising the creature’s inborn enlightenment and excellence of his mental caliber. Symbolically, Saraswati resides in his Pran because it rides on the swan, i.e. in his heart, throat and mind—that is, his heart has purity of emotions, he speaks good of all, and his words are sought after by all as priceless gems of wisdom, and his mind is intelligent, discerning and noble.

The alphabet ‘Ha’ of the word ‘Hans’ is sounded by the vibration of the exhaled wind passing through the vocal cords present in the throat or the wind pipe which connects to the nose, while the alphabet ‘Sa’ is sounded by the root of the tongue which opens into the mouth when the breath is inhaled. Both the nose and the mouth open in the same cavity called the throat. Hence, the inter relationship between ‘Ha’ and ‘Sa’ is evident. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is like the divine swan, but he was unaware of his divinity and sublimity, his exalted stature, till that was pointed out to him in this verse. So he must become one like a ‘swan’, remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must do not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan.

During the twenty-four hour period covering a single day and night, a person inhales and exhales, or breathes, roughly twenty-one thousand times because each cycle of inhalation and exhalation is equivalent to saying one Mantra ‘Hans’ consisting of the two syllables ‘Ha and Sa’.

Hence, the higher forms of mendicants are compared with this bird.

<sup>2</sup>Though they eat and drink like an ordinary man, but they taste these two things symbolically not only to purify themselves because the *cow’s urine and dung* are considered purifying and holy, but also to prove that for them taste and nature of food matters not, and they treat everything alike, that they have truly overcome the natural instincts of the taste buds to yearn for delicious food and drink. This does not mean

that, by being immune to taste or treating everything alike, they would also eat those things that are prohibited by the scriptures, such as meat and honey, though these two things are part of staple food for ordinary people. They, in short, adhere to the strict principles as laid down by the scriptures. Further, when they take such food, the people would try to keep a safe distance from them because of their unconventional and odd eating habits; this in turn would protect these Bhikshuks from being too intimate with any householder. It also helps them to purify themselves of any taint that might inadvertently affect them because of the tainted food got by them in the course of begging for food as it is not practicably possible to verify if the food-giving household is righteous and good or not as prescribed in verse no. 3 above. So, eating cow dung and sipping cow's urine is a gesture more of a symbolic nature rather than the actual eating or drinking them in the conventional term. It is more of a sort of symbolic purification rite, a sort of repentance for past indulgences and sins.

<sup>3</sup>The *moon* is cited as their ideal for the following reasons—(a) The moon is calm and soothing as opposed to the sun. So like the moon they also remain calm and provide peace and spiritual solace to others wherever they go. (b) The moon is always changing and never appears the same on any two nights. So they also change their location constantly as they do not have a permanent abode for themselves, and appear to be non-conformist and odd in their general behaviour as far as the world is concerned. (c) The moon is dark on the first night, then it gradually increases in its brightness and reaches its pinnacle on the full moon night, and finally begins to decrease in size and shape and brightness till it vanishes from sight altogether. So such Sanyasis also run their full course in their lives, taking birth as an obscure child in some household, acquire fame and glory till they reach their climax in adulthood, and then they start to move out from limelight and lead a life of renunciation and reclusion whereby their worldly pomp and shine symbolised by their worldly achievements, name, glory, majesty, wealth and prosperity begin to decline, and ultimately they completely vanish from the scene altogether when they shed their mortal coils. (d) There is another symbolism here. Even as the moon progressively goes on getting enhanced in size and shape during its first half of its cycle, the spiritual glories and powers that these Sanyasis acquire and possess go on increasing exponentially from day to day till they reach their best shine and zenith of glory when their fame and name is at its height, but then they realise that there is a day not too far when they would have to die. So they begin to retract themselves from exposure in this world, and gradually withdraw themselves into themselves. Finally, when the time comes, they quietly dissolve into nothingness resembling the dark disc of the moon on the night of the dark moon. (e) But this does not mean that they have gone and their glory and achievements lost for ever, because the moon has actually not gone anywhere though it is not visible, as it reappears the very next night. Likewise, these Sanyasis also remain incognito but make their appearance when the time comes. (f) Like the ever-changing moon, they keep changing their location and external behaviour to ensure that they are not recognised by a person on two consecutive occasions; this is to ensure that they don't get attached to or infatuated with anyone. They wish to remain incognito and humble.]

अथ परमहंसा नाम संवर्तकारुणिश्चेतकेतुजडभरतदत्तात्रेयशुकवामदेवहारीतकप्रभृतयोऽष्टौ ग्रासांश्चरन्तो योगमार्गे मोक्षमेव प्रार्थयन्ते । वृक्षमूले शून्यगृहे श्मशानवासिनो वा साम्बरा वा दिगम्बरा वा । न तेषां धर्माधर्मौ लाभालाभौ शुद्धाशुद्धौ द्वैतवर्जिता समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनाः सर्ववर्णेषु भैक्षाचरणं कृत्वा सर्वत्रात्मैवेति पश्यन्ति । अथ जातरूपधरा निर्द्वन्द्वा निष्परिग्रहाः शुक्लध्यानपरायणा आत्मनिष्ठाः प्राणसंधारणार्थं यथोक्तकाले भैक्षमाचरन्तः शून्यागारदेवगृहतृणकूट वल्मीकवृक्षमूलकुलालशालाग्निहोत्रशालानदीपुलिनगिरिकन्दरकुहरकोटरनिर्झरस्थण्डिले तत्र ब्रह्ममार्गे

सम्यक्संपन्नाः शुद्धमानसाः परमहंसाचरणेन संन्यासेन देहत्यागं कुर्वन्ति ते परमहंसा नामेत्युपनिषत्  
॥५॥

॥ भिक्षुकोपनिषद् ॥

atha paramahaṃsā nāma  
saṃvartakāruṇīśvetaketujaḍabharatadattātreyasūka-  
vāmadevahārītakaprabhṛtayo'sṭau grāsāṃścaranto yogamārgē mokṣameva  
prārthayante / vrkṣamūle sūnyagrhe śmaśānavāsino vā sāmbarā vā  
digambarā vā / na teṣāṃ dharmādharmāu lābhālābhau śuddhāśuddhau  
dvaitavarjitā samaloṣṭāśmakāññicāṇḥ sarvavarṇeṣu bhaikṣācaraṇaṃ kṛtvā  
sarvatrātmaveti paśyanti / atha jātārūpadharā nirdvandvā niṣparigrahāḥ  
śukladhyāna-parāyaṇā ātmaniṣṭhāḥ prāṇasaṃdhāraṇārthaṃ yathoktakāle  
bhaikṣamā-carantaḥ  
śūnyāgāradevagrhatṛṇakūṭavaḥmīkavṛkṣamūlakulāśālāgnihotra-  
śālānadīpulīnagirikandarakuharakoṭāranirjharasthaṇḍile tatra brahmanārgē  
samyaksaṃpannāḥ śuddhamānasāḥ paramahaṃsācaraṇena saṃnyāsenā  
dehatyāgaṃ kurvanti te paramahaṃsā nāmet्युपनिषत् // 5 //

// thus ends Bhikshuk Upanishad //

5. The 'Paramhans' (i.e. the best types of Sanyasis amongst those who are called Hans as described in the previous verse) Bhikshuks also eats eight mouthfuls or morsels of food (just enough to sustain their life in their body) and follows the path of Yoga in search of Moksha (emancipation and salvation).

Some of the exalted Paramhans Bhikshuks are the following—Samwartak, Aruni, Shwetketu, Jada-Bhagat, Dattatreya, Shukdeo, Vamdeo, Haaritak, etc.

They reside under the shade of a tree, an abandoned house, or the cremation ground. They can wear a cloth or even remain naked. They are not too obsessed about what is Dharma and what is not, about what is beneficial and what is not<sup>1</sup>.

They do not believe in the dual concept of something being pure and another being impure. They do not distinguish between earth (mud), stone (gems and other precious stones) and gold (the most precious of worldly assets).

They beg for food from the house of all castes or creeds without making any distinction, because they perceive the same Atma which resides in their own bosom as being present everywhere else also (i.e. in all the creatures, and therefore in each member of the society, whether he belongs to a low class or a high class).

They are (innocent, care free and un-corrupt) like a newly-born child<sup>2</sup>. They are without any mental and emotional perplexities and agitations. They have no confusions and doubts to disturb their calmness of demeanours. They have no attachments and longings of any kind. They are ever engrossed in righteous, noble and auspicious thoughts. They are firm in their conviction about the truthfulness of their Atma. They beg for food just to sustain their life till its time is up.

While doing so, they spend their time living in an abandoned building, a temple, a hut, near an ant hill, under the tree, near a potter's house, the site of a fire sacrifice, banks of a river, a mountain cave, a hillock, a valley, near a water fall or a natural spring, or any such uninhabited, secluded and serene place away from the hustle and bustle of mundane world.

They remain pure, untainted and uncorrupt; they spend their lives like a 'swan', remaining pure and immaculate, selecting those things that are considered the best and the noblest of the lot available to them, and leaving behind the rest as worthless. Finally they abandon their gross physical bodies at the time of death to attain the final emancipation and salvation for their souls.

Such a person who adheres to the auspicious path and eclectic norms of Sanyas<sup>3</sup> as enumerated above is indeed known as a 'Paramhans'—verily, this is the affirmation of this Upanishad. Amen! (5).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>That is, they treat everything with equanimity; for them whether anything is righteous and auspicious or not matters little because they treat all circumstances and events alike and make no distinction between them. All conduct and behaviour are the same for them for the simple reason that they are ever engrossed in contemplation upon the pure conscious Atma and the supreme transcendental Brahm and are the least bothered about what the body does. Since their mind and intellect are constantly involved in righteous thoughts, there is no question of unrighteousness ever tainting them, and therefore all their deeds and words become exemplarily auspicious and virtuous.

<sup>2</sup>That is, like a newly-born infant, they are mentally innocent and free from all worldly cares and worries as well as corruptions and taints that lead to various worldly faults and delusions which afflict adults and are so characteristic of the people who are engrossed in this world and its affairs. A child is considered pure in heart; it is basically unattached with anyone but appears to be so endearing towards all and easy to please with the slightest show of affection. The child does not even know how to get angry, and even if it does its anger is very superficial and short-lived; it would eat anything offered to it by anyone; it would talk with anyone who has the inclination to do so, not distinguishing between two people and not treating anyone as either a friend or a foe; it has no passionate attachments with or hatreds towards anyone. In short, the Paramhans Bhikshuk is just as pure and innocent as the infant just born or a very young child.

<sup>3</sup>True Sanyasis have risen above all mundane considerations pertaining to the gross material world as well as anything related to their bodies. They have realised the falsehood of both, and therefore bother about none. That is why they pay scant attention to their behaviour or taking care of their bodies. They literally give two hoots to what the world says or thinks about them, or what would happen to their bodies in the absence of proper care. They are the least worried as to what would happen to the body after their death, such as its last rites and its cremation. This is because for them the body was merely a vehicle to carry their own self, the Atma during its sojourn in this world, and therefore there is no reason to worry unnecessarily about the body. Further, this stanza also means that they have strictly adhered to the tenets of the Sanyas way of life, i.e. they have been true to the vows they had taken when they had renounced this world and had decided to spend their rest of the life as a wandering friar or monk or mendicant, and therefore at the time of death they have nothing to fear about. They have at last reached their destination, and it is time to celebrate.]

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### (3.6) Turiyateet Upanishad:

This Upanishad is also known as Turiyateet-Avadhut Upanishad. It incorporates a conversation between the creator Brahma and Lord Narayan, who is the Viraat Purush, the Supreme Being, and also known as Vishnu. Narayan is also the father of Brahma because the latter had emerged atop a divine lotus sprouting from the navel of Narayan or Vishnu.

In this Upanishad, Brahma asks Narayan the path to be followed by seekers of emancipation and salvation. In his answer, Narayan enumerates all the salient features, characteristic behavioural norms, temperaments and natural inclinations, the thoughts and emotions etc. of those people who are spiritual pilgrims seeking the supreme Truth about the divine Being who is the universal consciousness of creation much like the Atma is the individual consciousness of the seeker. It is a journey of self realisation leading to its ultimate goal which is attainment of final emancipation and salvation of the creature.

The name of the Upanishad is derived from the word 'Turiya' which is the 4<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the pure consciousness. The word 'Atit' or 'Ateet' means 'free from, transcendental, and beyond'. Therefore, the composite word Turiyateet would refer to that state of existence of the Atma or pure consciousness that has gone beyond all the four states of existences of the Atma, and hence would be the 5<sup>th</sup> state of its existence. It is the state which goes beyond the perception of ordinary bliss and happiness; it is an eclectic state of perpetual and eternal spiritual beatitude and felicity from where there is no return. It is tantamount to final and ultimate liberation and deliverance of the soul of the creature. A Turiyateet lives in a perpetual state of Samadhi, which is a trance-like state of total indifference to everything; it is a state of total neutrality; it is a state of higher level of transcendental existence which is steady and perpetual and marked by extreme bliss, beatitude and felicity.

The other name 'Turiyateet-Avadhut' has the word 'Avadhut' in it, and it means a renunciate Sanyasi, a Parivrajak, a friar, a monk, a mendicant or an ascetic who is considered as the best amongst this class of spiritual seekers, and therefore said to be the one who has reached the pinnacle of spiritual upliftment whereby he remains submerged in an ocean of fathomless ecstasy and bliss, remaining engrossed in a perpetual state of contemplation and meditation. Though visibly he might not seem to be a realised man, but a true Avadhut is an exalted soul, a self-realised and an enlightened person par-excellence who has witnessed Brahm first hand. This Upanishad is dedicated to such a person.

॥ तुरीयातीतोपनिषद् ॥

अथ तुरीयातीतावधूतानां कोऽयं मार्गस्तेषां का स्थितिरिति सर्वलोक पितामहो भगवन्तं पितरमादिनारायणं परिसमेत्योवाच ॥१॥

atha turīyātītāvadhūtānām ko'yaṁ mārgasteṣām kā sthīriti sarvaloka  
pitāmaho bhagavantam pitaramādinārāyaṇam parisametyovāca // 1 //

1. Once, the patriarch of creation, Lord Brahma, approached his father Lord Narayan (Vishnu or Viraat Purush) and asked him, 'Oh Lord! What is the path of 'Turiyateet Avadhut', and what are its salient features; what are the characters of those who tread this noble, auspicious and virtuous spiritual path?' (1).

[Note---The Atma or the soul which is the pure self of the creature has three states of existence—the waking, the dream and the deep sleep state of consciousness. There is a 4<sup>th</sup> state also, and it is called 'Turiya', which is obtained as a result of going beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of deep sleep, and it is a permanent state of bliss and felicity. Beyond this 4<sup>th</sup> state is the Turiyateet, literally the state which is beyond the Turiya state and in which the Atma (pure consciousness) is free from all the encumbrances and characters displayed by it during the other four states. Therefore, Turiyateet would be the 5<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the Atma.

The brain has two components—the intellect and the mind. The former is under the direct control of the Atma while the mind is subordinate to the intellect. The mind receives worldly stimuli through the sense organs, passes them to the intellect, obtains instructions from the intellect and passes them on to the organs of action — this state prevails when the man is 'awake'.

Now, when he is asleep, there are two stages—either he dreams or he does not. During the 'dreams state', the inherent Vasanas (the hidden passions, yearning and desires) come into play at the sub-conscious level and the mind lives up to all those Vasanas in an imaginary world. But when there is no dream, i.e. during the 'deep sleep state' of consciousness, the Atma is freed from interference and it reverts back to its original form of being 'nothingness, having no feelings and no emotions', just like the case wherein the mirror is removed from the front of a man and his image vanishes from it and the image reverts back into its primary source or object, which in this case is the man himself whose image was formed in the mirror. The Atma is an image of the supreme Brahma. When the mirror of the mind-intellect is removed, it (Atma) reverts back into its primary form which is Brahma whereas it related itself with the world when the mind-intellect was in active mode. So, the aspect of 'sleep' discussed in this section is the 'deep sleep state of consciousness', because it is in this state that the creature comes in direct contact of his true identity or true self, which is called Atma or pure consciousness. The creature is 'delinked or uncoupled' from the external world while sound asleep.

For the external world, a sleeping man is as good as being dead. For example, if a sleeping man is attacked by someone, he won't resist; he won't even know what has happened just in front of him while he was asleep. He is not medically or conventionally regarded as dead, but for all practical purposes 'he is as good as dead'. He neither feels pain nor happiness when in a deep sleep state of existence, which is beyond the dream state of sleep. The 'deep sleep state' is also called 'Swapraant', literally meaning to be in one's own territory, to dwell in one's natural habitat. In this state, the gross body consisting of the sense organs and the subtle body consisting of the mind-intellect complex remain shutoff, and the Atma residing in the causal body remains absolutely calm and peaceful and oblivious of the turmoil of the external mundane world. To be in this state perpetually is the natural habit and nature of the Atma, and therefore it finds this state its natural habitat. It is like being in a state of suspended animation or a self-imposed state of coma when the creature remains indifferent to what is happening around it and instead remains cocooned in its own shell. It is like a state of being virtually dead, or coming to a stage voluntarily which is almost like being dead, but is not actual death.

During the Turiya state (i.e. the 4<sup>th</sup> state) of existence of the consciousness, the Atma lives uniformly in all the other three states, viz. the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleeping. It is not limited to one or the other state, and therefore would display all the signs that are unique to each of these states taken separately as well as in a composite manner. In the Turiya state therefore the man would display the combined character traits that are the result of a combination of all the individual traits of these three states of existence. Beyond this is the Turiyateet state (i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> state) in which the Atma goes beyond the restrictions and limitations of the other four states, and therefore it becomes free from any of their encumbrances. This is a state in which Brahm exists and his realisation is possible. It is the pinnacle of spiritual pursuits, the highest rung that one can climb before all spiritual achievements bear fruit, and which would enable the aspirant to come face to face with Brahm, i.e. become Brahm-realised. It helps the spiritual aspirant to witness and experience Brahm first hand.]

तमाह भगवान्नारायणो योऽयमवधूतमार्गस्थो लोके दुर्लभतरो नतु बाहुल्यो यद्येको भवति स एव नित्यपूतः स एव वैराग्यमूर्तिः स एव ज्ञानाकारः स एव वेदपुरुष इति ज्ञानिनो मन्यन्ते । महापुरुषो यस्तच्चित्तं मय्येवावतिष्ठते । अहं च तस्मिन्नेवावस्थितः ॥२॥

tamāha bhagavānnārāyaṇo yo'yamavadhūtamārgastho loka durlabhataro natu bāhulyo yadyeko bhavati sa eva nityapūtaḥ sa eva vairāgyamūrtiḥ sa eva jñānākāraḥ sa eva vedapuruṣa iti jñānino manyante / mahāpuruṣo yastaccittaṁ mayyevāvatīṣṭhate / ahaṁ ca tasminnevāvasthitaḥ // 2 //

2. Lord Narayan replied to him, ‘Those who walk on the eclectic spiritual path known as ‘Avadhut’—i.e. those who sincerely and honestly take the vows of the highest form of ‘Sanyas’ by renouncing the pleasures and comforts of this material world, who completely snap all their ties with the latter, who cheerfully embrace all the gravest of difficulties encountered during the pilgrimage seeking the ultimate Truth and the divine knowledge of the Supreme Being, who stick to it loyally, faithfully and unwaveringly, who are inspired and motivated and have exemplary courage, fortitude and resilience, and who actually succeed in it by the dint of their honesty—are rare indeed! Such people are an exception rather than the norm.

If by chance one is fortunate enough to become one such exalted soul, or comes in contact with one such true, sincere and honest Avadhut, then it is expected that one knows his basic qualities, behavioural norms and other characteristic features so as to recognise him as Brahm personified or as a Brahm-realised person, which are in brief as follows:--He is always pure, un-corrupt and clean (mentally, bodily and mentally); he is an image or personification of the glorious virtues of renunciation, dispassion, detachment, indifference, non-involvement and non-indulgence; he is enlightened and self realised as well as a personification or a living embodiment of (all the tenets, maxims and axioms enshrined in the canons of) the holy Vedas. This is the considered opinion of the wise ones. Such a great and exalted soul constantly keeps his mind and thoughts focused and firmly rooted in me (the supreme Lord), and therefore I find my abode in him (i.e. in his heart) (2).



सोऽयमादौ तावत्क्रमेण कुटीचको बहूदकत्वं प्राप्य बहूदको हंसत्वमवलम्ब्य हंसः परमहंसो भूत्वा  
॥३॥

so'yamādaṁ tāvatkrameṇa kuṭīcako bahūdakatvaṁ prāpya bahūdako  
haṁsatvamavalambya haṁsaḥ paramahaṁso bhūtvā // 3 //

3. A Sanyasi (i.e. a renunciate and reclusive monk, a friar, a hermit, a mendicant or an ascetic who has rescinded all his attachments with the mortal world of material sense objects) passes through four primary stages in his spiritual pursuit as an ascetic. These phases are the following:---'Kutichak' in the beginning, followed by 'Bahudak', later on by 'Hans', and finally by 'Param-Hans' states of Sanyas. [These stages and their characteristic features have been elaborately described in other Upanishads on the subject of Sanyas.] (3).

स्वरूपानुसंधानेन सर्वप्रपञ्चं विदित्वा दण्डकमण्डलुकटिसूत्रकौपीनाच्छादनं स्वविध्युक्तक्रियादिकं सर्वमप्सु  
संन्यस्य दिगम्बरो भूत्वा विवर्णजीर्णवल्कलाजिनपरिग्रहमपि संत्यज्य तदूर्ध्वममन्त्रवदाचरन्क्षौराभ्य-  
ङ्गस्नानोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रादिकं विहाय लौकिकवैदिकमप्युपसंहृत्य सर्वत्र पुण्यापुण्यवर्जितो ज्ञानाज्ञानमपि विहाय  
॥४॥

svarūpānusandhānena sarvaprapañcaṁ viditvā daṇḍakamaṇḍalukaṭisūtra-  
kaupīnācchādanam svaavidhyuktakriyādikam sarvamapsu samnyasya  
digambaro bhūtvā vivarṇajīrṇavalkalājīnaparigrahamapi samtyajya  
tadūrdhvamamantravadācaranṣaurābhyaṅgasnānordhvapuṇḍrādikam vihāya  
laukikavaidikamapyupasaṁhṛtya sarvatra puṇyāpuṇyavarjito jñānājñānamapi  
vihāya // 4 //

4. A true Sanyasi contemplates and ponders deeply into the underlying reality, truth and substance of all that he beholds in this world. His self inspired deep research provides him with an insight into the uselessness of external pretences which he regards as superficial, deceitful, imposturing, hypocrisy and cheating one's own self. He realises that there is no real need for external formalities in the journey of self realisation of the ultimate and unequivocal spiritual Truth in creation. In fact, they are only impediments creating various hurdles which are best avoided; they create an unnecessary sense of un-fulfilment, perplexity and agitation for the creature<sup>1</sup>.

With this self realisation and enlightenment about the 'truth', he symbolically lays to rest or discards all his external symbols of Sanyas—such as his staff/sceptre/rod, the water pot, the waist band, the loin cloth, and the piece of cloth draped over the upper part of his body as an over-garment. He also simultaneously does away with his routine daily religious rites, such as the purification rite, observing the different sacraments and offering of oblations and libations along with prayers three times a day (called the ritual of 'Sandhya' when prayers are offered at dawn, at noon and at evening hours), doing fire sacrifices etc. In order to free himself from these formalities, he offers all of them to a clean water body, such as a pond, a river, a lake or any other water body available at hand.

Having discarded all worldly paraphernalia (i.e. all external signs) of Sanyas which are like a burden for him, he becomes completely 'Digambar'—literally one

who is naked and wears only the vast, open sky, the Firmament, as a sheet to cover himself with. [Here it means that he has freed himself from all formalities and encumbrances which shackle him down to specified rituals instead of freeing his soul to choose its own path.]

His sense of non-attachment and non-collection reaches its pinnacle when he discards even tattered garments made from patted bark of trees and leaves sewn together with twines, or even a hide of an antelope (or deer skin which is generally carried by hermits to serve a dual purpose of a seat as well as a blanket to cover the body).

He stops following any set rules, regulations or norms of behaviour and conduct (such as offering regular prayers, libations, oblations to the holy Gods or the sacred fire, repeating the Mantras or taking the purification bath, getting regularly shaved, using any cleansing rub to scrub the body clean while bathing, and applying the Tilak mark which usually consists of three lines marked on the forehead and called a 'Tripunda').

He even abstains from doing all formal religious deeds ordained by the Vedas for an ordinary man to make him righteous and noble as well as to inculcate virtuousness in him. [This is not to demean the sacrosanct authority and supremacy of the holy Vedas, but because by the virtue of his self realisation and enlightenment, he has passed that stage when a person must obey the doctrines of the Vedas to enable him to follow a righteous and auspicious path, as that aim has already been achieved by him. The objective of the Vedas is to kindle enlightenment, wisdom and self realisation so that the creature is able to break free from the fetters that shackle it to the cycle of transmigration, a cycle of horrors and torments, of miseries and pain which are basically caused by the ignorance of the reality and truth behind the external façade of creation, and instead find eternal peace and happiness by understanding the 'truth'. As a true Sanyasi has accomplished this objective, there is actually no need for him to observe formalities any more.]

In short, he discards all his mundane worldly obligations and abstains from doing both the righteous, good and auspicious deeds as well as the unrighteous, bad and inauspicious deeds. [That is, he becomes neutral, indifferent, equitable, unruffled and unmoved under any given circumstance. Equanimity, calmness and evenness of temperament, perpetual fortitude, resilience and forbearance, become his hallmarks. He does not differentiate or stops to see the difference between any two deeds or actions; for him both are the same. This is the high watermark of enlightened conception of 'non-duality'. He has become 'un-involved'.]

His state of existence has reached that pinnacle when there is no need either to follow/pursue any knowledge or remain in oblivion in ignorance. [That is, since the aim of knowledge is to enlighten and empower a person by removing his ignorance, that purpose has been fulfilled for an enlightened man when he honestly renounces the artificial and deluding attractions and enticing temptations of the entrapping world, and instead takes to the path of Sanyas. That's why emphasis is put on sincerity and honesty while taking the vows of Sanyas, as otherwise the man would be open to temptations and there would be reasonable chance of his falling down from his path. To fall will be more disastrous than not taking Sanyas at all, because the fallen man would take others along with him when he sinks like a boat which drowns all its occupants when it sinks! This is because the people look up to the Sanyasi for moral and spiritual guidance, treat him as an example to emulate in their individual lives, and have the greatest of faith, trust, honour and reverence for him. His falling

would be devastating for the entire society around him. It would be shattering for the whole august institution of Sanyas.]

That is, in brief, he rises above all criterions and norms of worldly behaviours and conducts that are classified as good or bad, righteous or unrighteous, normal or abnormal (4).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>When a *Param-Hans Sanyasi* does not have to bother about any formalities; he has no tensions and obligations. He does not have to bother whether or not a particular rite or sacrament has been properly done according to set norms. This frees his mind from being bogged down in mundane ritualistic formalities and carrying out of religious routines, and instead allows him to concentrate his time and energy on higher things of the spiritual realm for which he has taken Sanyas in the first place.]

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखमानावमानं निर्जित्य वासनात्रयपूर्वकं

निन्दाऽनिन्दागर्वमत्सरदम्भदर्पेच्छाद्वेषकामक्रोधलोभमोहहर्षमिर्षासूयात्मसंरक्षणादिकं दग्ध्वा ॥५॥

śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhamānāvamānaṃ nirjitya vāsanātrayapūrvakaṃ nindā-  
'nindāgarvamatsaradambhadarpadveṣakāmakrodhalobhamohaharṣāmarṣā-  
sūyātmasaṃrakṣaṇādikaṃ dagdhvā // 5 //

5. He overcomes the various adverse factors of life that create so much agitations, restlessness and vexations for an ordinary man, factors which cause so much misery and torment for the body and the mind, such as extremes of heat and cold, happiness and grief, honour and insults. He burns his so-called three Vasanas<sup>1</sup>.

He remains calm, unruffled and unmoved in the face of criticism or praise. He burns all the negative traits such as (a) false pride, ego, vanity and arrogance, (b) jealousy, envy and ill will as well as hypocrisy, deceit, imposturing and pretence, (c) self praise, self adulation and pride of self, (d) desires, wishes, aspiration and yearnings, (e) animosity, hatred, ill will, malice and jealousy which lead to anger, vehemence, wrath and vengeance, (f) greed, rapacity, yearnings and avarice which are the cause of all worldly attachments, delusions and ignorance, (g) joys, happiness, elation and exhilaration as well as intolerance, fanaticism, bigotry and jealousy, (h) a tendency to find faults with others and pricking holes with them, and (i) to be paranoid and have a desire to protect oneself from physical harm by hurting the opponent in a compulsive pre-emptive way, merely on suspicion, even before the latter actually hurts the former (5).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>The three *Vasanas* are the various attractions and passions that form the integral and inherent nature and temperament of a creature and determine its behavioral as well as mental conduct. They can be briefly summarized as follows :--- (1) Vasanas that create a deep sense of attachment with, or a great desire and yearning for the comforts and pleasures of the body and gratification of the sense organs, (2) Vasanas that create the various inclinations of the 'Mana' or the mind and intellect complex that govern emotions and thoughts, and (3) Vasanas that create attractions for the world. Vasanas cover in their ambit the deep desire to excel in the scriptures and be recognised as a scholar and be sought after as a renowned preacher or theologian, which begets fame and honour. All these are broadly classified as Vasanas. Therefore, Vasanas are of three types:--- (a) 'Lok Vasana'—meaning a craving for the world, its objects, fame and material acquisition, (b) 'Deha Vasana'—bodily pleasure and comfort as well as self gratification, and (c) 'Shastra Vasana'—a desire to learn more and more of the

scriptures and be called a learned, scholarly person, an expert, leading to fame, glory and wealth.]

स्ववपुः कुणपाकारमिव पश्यन्नयत्नेनानियमेन लाभालाभौ समौ कृत्वा गोवृत्त्या प्राणसंधारणं  
कुर्वन्त्यत्प्राप्तं तेनैव निर्लोलुपः सर्वविद्यापाण्डित्यप्रपञ्चं भस्मीकृत्य स्वरूपं गोपयित्वा  
ज्येष्ठाऽज्येष्ठत्वानपलापकः ॥६॥

svavapuḥ kuṇapākāramiva paśyannayatnenānīyamena lābhālābhau samau  
kṛtvā govṛṭṭyā prāṇasandhāraṇaṁ kurvanyatprāptaṁ tenaiva nirlolupaḥ  
sarvavidyāpāṇḍityaprapañcaṁ bhasmīkṛtya svarūpaṁ gopayitvā  
jyeṣṭhā'jyeṣṭhatvānapalāpakaḥ // 6 //

6. He treats his body as no better than a corpse. He does not make any efforts or struggles to have any type of worldly gains because he treats gains and losses alike with fortitude and equanimity. Living a humble and peaceful life like that of a cow, he accepts whatever comes his way and remains contented with it. He overcomes all forms of greed and yearnings (such as for name, fame, money, honour), and buries or relinquishes or forgoes all the benefits and glories that accrue to him on account of the special skills, expertise, scholarship and erudition that he might possess. [That is, once he takes the holy vows of Sanyas, he stops treating himself as a learned man or a skilled craftsman, and for that matter any vestiges of his previous phase of life should be forgotten for good. He should have nothing to do with his earlier life before he took to Sanyas. He treats himself as a king who has abdicated his throne and relinquished all his rights over the kingdom and its attendant privileges.]

He leads an anonymous life, hiding his earlier identity. [For instance, if he was a king, he wanders incognito even in his erstwhile realm like an ordinary mendicant or friar, begging for food and living an ascetic's life of hardship and sufferance.]

He treats all alike, whether they are lowly or of a high stature. For all practical purposes, he out-worldly appears to be ignorant of the niceties and courtesies of the world; he does not bother about formalities and decorum of the external world, because for him all are alike, without any distinction (6).

सर्वोत्कृष्टत्वसर्वात्मकत्वाद्वैतं कल्पयित्वा मत्तो व्यतिरिक्तः कश्चिन्नान्योऽस्तीति  
देवगुह्यादिधनमात्मन्युपसंहृत्य दुःखेन नोद्विग्नः सुखेन नानुमोदको रागे निःस्पृहः सर्वत्र  
शुभाशुभयोरनभिस्नेहः सर्वेन्द्रियोपरमः ॥७॥

sarvotkrṣṭatvasarvātmakatvādvaitaṁ kalpayitvā matto vyatiriktaḥ  
kaścinnānyo'stīti devaguhyādidhanamātmānyupasaṁhṛtya duḥkhena  
nodvignaḥ sukhena nānumodako rāge niḥsprhaḥ sarvatra  
śubhāśubhayoanabhisnehaḥ sarvendriyoparamaḥ // 7 //

7. Being firmly convinced and being of a firm faith that the supreme, ultimate, all-pervading, omnipresent, almighty and eternal Authority of this creation is the non-dual entity called the 'Atma', the pure consciousness, he believes that there is nothing besides his true 'self' (i.e. the Atma). He conceals the great secrets and eclectic but

esoteric truths about divinity and spiritualism in his bosom. [That is, he does not overtly boast of his spiritual prowess, mystical powers and divine assets, he does not beat the trumpet of his enlightened stature, and prefers rather to keep mum about them. This enables him to remain anonymous and avoid publicity which prevents him from being bothered by people flocking to him to seek his intervention and blessings for their worldly problems, thereby disturbing his peace of mind and serenity. Consequentially, since he is wise, enlightened and self-realised enough to see the futility and falsehood of this body and the external world, he does not get perturbed and restless during sufferings caused by grief and sorrows, nor does he feel elated, glad and happy under favourable circumstances.

He does not believe in having any kind of attachment with anything, nor does he consider anything as being auspicious or as inauspicious (because for him all are equal, all are alike). All his sense organs (of perception and action)<sup>1</sup> have attained a state of perpetual neutrality, worldly inactivity and profound renunciation—they have no desires left in them, they have calmed down and taken to virtual retirement, as it were (7).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>There are five organs of perception—ears, nose, eyes, tongue and skin, and five organs of action—mouth, hands, legs, genitals and excretory.]

स्वपूर्वापन्नाश्रमाचारविद्याधर्म—प्राभवमननुस्मरन्त्यक्तवर्णाश्रमाचारः सर्वदा दिवानक्तसमत्वेनास्वप्नः सर्वत्र सर्वदा संचारशीलो ॥८॥

svapūrvāpannāśramācāravidyādharmaprābhavamananausmarantyaakta-  
varṇāśramācāraḥ sarvadā divānaktasamatvenāsvapnaḥ sarvatra  
sarvadā saṁcāraśīlo // 8 //

8. He does not recollect anything pertaining to his past life, his educational scholarship, his religiously ordained moral duties and responsibilities which are collectively called his 'Dharma'. He also never thinks of early powers, influences, authority, majesty and glories so much so that he now discards all formalities and norms of conducts and behaviours associated with humdrum routine of life in this world. Since he treats both the day and the night equally (and sees no difference between these two artificial time zones), he never sleeps, literally though. [That is, he is always alert and vigilant against temptations and pitfalls in his spiritual path. He never allows lethargy and indolence to get the better of him. He remains equally alert and careful while dealing with things for which darkness of night is a metaphor, such as any worldly delusions and temptations that might come his way, or for which the brightness of the day stands, such as basking in the glory of fame, name, honour and respect that may be heaped on him by the virtue of his being an exalted Sanyasi.]

He remains always on the move; he never stays at one place for much long as it is said that a Sanyasi who stays at a single place for long becomes polluted and unclean like the stagnant water of a pool. This water gets covered with scum and algae. On the other hand, the water of a moving river is deemed to be clean and considered even holy. Besides this, a moving ascetic can spread his spiritual warmth and blessings to benefit mankind if he goes from place to place (8).

देहमात्रावशिष्टो जलस्थलकमण्डलुः सर्वदानुन्मतो बालोन्मत्तपिशाचवदेकाकी संचरन्नसंभाषणपरः  
स्वरूपध्यानेन निरालम्बमवलम्ब्य स्वात्मनिष्ठानुकूलेन सर्वं विस्मृत्य ॥९॥

dehamātrāvaśiṣṭo jalasthalakamaṇḍaluḥ sarvadānunmatto bālonmattapiśāca-  
vadekāki saṁcarannasaṁbhāṣaṇaparaḥ svarūpadhyānena nirālamba-  
mavalambya svātmaniṣṭhānukūlena sarvaṁ vismr̥tya // 9 //

9. The only thing that remains with him is his body. [Obviously, the pronoun ‘him’ refers to the Sanyasi’s true-self which is his Atma and not his physical gross body. The Atma needs the body to live in as long as its journey in the mortal world is not complete.]

Any water body (e.g. a pond, a lake, a river, a stream etc.) is like his water pot. [That is, he need not carry any separate pot or vessel to collect and carry water for drinking and other essential purposes, for whenever he feels the need for water he can directly take it from these natural sources. To drink he can use his cupped palms to lift water; for bathing and other purposes he can take a dip in the water source itself.]

He always remains calm, composed, unruffled, poised and tranquil internally, but externally or overtly he behaves erratically, unpredictably and unconventionally like a child, or even like a deranged man or a fiend. Adopting this unconventional demeanour, he wanders alone silently, all by himself, not talking with anyone, remaining penitent, reclusive and forlorn. [There is no wonder in it as which civilized person would like to talk with such a taciturn, indifferent and unresponsive man who behaves in such a funny manner. But this is a wise ploy used by the Sanyasi to avoid company of worldly people which could cause disturbance to his calmness and peace of mind and heart.]

He remains engrossed in himself, always contemplative and pensive. He thinks about his ‘true self’ and its stupendous, magnificent and fantastic nature. Being unattached and unconcerned, he forgets about everything else (9).

तुरीयातीतावधूतवेषेणाद्वैतनिष्ठापरः प्रणवात्मकत्वेन देहत्यागं करोति यः सोऽवधूतः स कृतकृत्यो  
भवतीत्युपनिषत् ॥१०॥

॥ इति तुरीयातीतोपनिषमाप्ता ॥

turiyātītāvadhūtavaveṣeṇādvaitaniṣṭhāparaḥ praṇavātmakatvena dehatyāgaṁ  
karoti yaḥ so’vadhūtaḥ sa kṛtakṛtyo bhavatītyupaniṣat // 10 //

// thus ends Turiyateet Upanishad //

10. In this manner, a friar who is known as an exalted ‘Turiyateet-Avadhuth’ is firmly rooted in and has a firm conviction about the supremacy, irrefutability and inviolability of the ‘non-dual’ concept of the ultimate and transcendental Truth which is the actual Reality in this creation, the truth and reality sans all deceit and conceit, all falsehoods and pretences. This Truth and Reality is called ‘Pranav’ or ‘Brahm’. He becomes oblivious of even his own body and eventually discards it also. With this last hurdle/obstacle out of the way for his ‘spirit’ (i.e. his Atma), he feels relieved of all

encumbrances associated with the compulsions to possess a body which was like a burden for him which he has now got rid of. Thus he feels fulfilled and accomplished. Verily, this is the teaching of this Upanishad (10).

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### (3.7) Yagyavalkya Upanishad:

This Upanishad is a major text dealing with the subject of ‘Sanyas’ which is a life of sincere renunciation and dispassion followed by ascetics, hermits, monks and friars who have broken all ties with this deluding world. This Upanishad is a dialogue between sage Yagyavalkya and the wise king Janak who approached the sage to learn about Sanyas, such as its basic principles, the best time to accept it, the due process, the life that is expected to be led by those who accept this vow, and the various dos and don’ts. In the course of this discourse, sage Yagyavalkya lays down the guidelines of truthful Sanyas, especially its higher category called Paramhans. He emphasises the paramount importance and need for internal renunciation and dispassion rather than mere external pretensions because the latter would only be tantamount to cheating oneself and the society. He stresses that sexual perversion and inability to control lust, passion and carnal desires as well as anger, wrath and vengefulness are two chief enemies against which a true Sanyasi (the follower of the path of Sanyas) should be cautious.

Sage Yagyavalkya was one of the most enlightened and self realised sages and seers of his time. A brief life sketch of the great sage is added at the end of this Upanishad named after him.

॥ याज्ञवल्क्योपनिषद् ॥

अथ जनको ह वैदेहो याज्ञवल्क्यमुपसमेत्योवाच भगवन्संन्यासमनुब्रूहीति । स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यो ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भवेत् । गृही भूत्वा वनी भवेत् वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेत् । यदि वेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादेव प्रव्रजेद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वा । अथ पुनर्व्रती वाऽव्रती वा स्नातको वाऽस्नातको वा उत्सन्नाग्निरनग्निको वा यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् ॥१॥

atha janako ha vaideho yājñavalkyamupasametyovāca bhagavansamnyāsa-manubrūhīti / sa hovāca yājñavalkyo brahmacaryaṃ samāpya gr̥hī bhavet / gr̥hī bhūtvā vani bhavet vanī bhūtvā pravrajat / yadi vetarathā brahmacaryādeva pravrajedgr̥hādvā vanādvā / atha punarvratī vā’vratī vā snātako vā’snātako vā utsannāgniranagniko vā yadahareva virajettadahareva pravrajat // 1 //

1. Once, king Janak, who was also known as 'Videha' (i.e. a person who is not concerned about his body and remains in a perpetual state of meditation), went to sage Yagyavalkya and said most humbly, 'Oh Lord! Please be kind enough to preach me about 'Sanyas' (broadly referring to the fourth stage in the life of a man when he is supposed to renounce all his worldly attachments and lead a life of a reclusive and pious hermit, an ascetic, a monk or a wandering mendicant, spending his time in self introspection and meditation, and finally obtain spiritual liberation and deliverance from this mundane and deluding world of an endless cycle of birth and death)'.

At his request, sage Yagyavalkya expounded in great detail about the philosophy and salient features of the life of Sanyas. He said, 'Oh king! A person should first live as a Brahmachari, and follow the principles and codes of conduct ordained for this way of life with due diligence. [This phase of life is called the Brahmacharya Ashram<sup>1</sup>.] Then he should step into the second phase of life called the Grihasta Ashram<sup>2</sup>. After having fully enjoyed the benefits and comforts that accrue in this life due to a family consisting of sons and wife etc., he should proceed to the forest to reside there in the third phase called the Vanprastha Ashram<sup>3</sup>. At the end of this phase, one should accept the fourth phase of life called the Sanyas Ashram<sup>4</sup>.

If he is able to have strict control over his sense organs, is able to exercise self-restraint on them, then he can enter the Sanyas Ashram directly from the first phase of life called Brahmacharya Ashram (skipping the two intermediary stages of Grihasta and Vanprastha Ashrams), or from the second phase called Grihasta (skipping the Vanprastha Ashram). In fact, whenever one develops steady, sincere and total renunciation, detachment and dispassion from this material world, one should take the vows of Sanyas the very same day without second thoughts.

Whether or not a Sanyasi (a follower of the path of Sanyas) observes the various sacraments, whether or not he is formally educated in the scriptures, whether or not he has done the fire sacrifice, as soon as the grand virtue of 'Vairagya', or exemplary renunciation, dispassion and detachment from this materialistic and deluding world sprouts in his heart, he should take the vows of Sanyas (1).

[Note-- The life of a man is divided into four segments or Ashrams—(a)

<sup>1</sup>Brahmacharya —this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style, (b) <sup>2</sup>Grihasta—when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called Grihasta Ashram which is a householder life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life and dealings with this deceptive world with all their accompanying horrifying problems, (c) <sup>3</sup>Vanprastha —this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) <sup>4</sup>Sanyas —this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and mediation, living a life of total renunciation and



begging for food, and single minded aiming for emancipation and salvation. This phase of Sanyas also has many stages depending upon the spiritual elevation and accomplishments of the aspirant, viz. Kutichak, Bahudak, Hansa, Paramhans, Turiyatit and Avadhut.

These four Ashrams, their characteristic features and virtues are described in detail in an Upanishad called ‘Ashramo-panishad’ belonging to the Atharva Veda tradition.]

तदेके प्राजापत्यामेवेष्टिं कुर्वन्ति । अथवा न कुर्यादाग्नेय्यामेव कुर्यात् । अग्निर्हि प्राणः । प्राणमेवैतया करोति । त्रैधातवीयामेव कुर्यात् । एतयैव त्रयो धातवो यदुत सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति । अयं ते योनिर्ऋत्विजो यतो जातो अरोचथाः । तं जानन्नग्न आरोहाथा नो वर्धया रयिमित्यनेन मन्त्रेणाग्निमाजिघ्रेत् । एष वा अग्नेर्योनिर्यः प्राणं गच्छ स्वां योनिं गच्छ स्वाहेत्येवमेवैतदाह ॥२॥

tadeke prājāpatyāmeveṣṭiṃ kurvanti / athavā na kuryādāgneyyāmeva kuryāt / agnirhi prāṇaḥ / prāṇamevaitayā karoti / traidhātavīyāmeva kuryāt / etayaiva trayo dhātavo yaduta sattvaṃ rajastama iti / ayaṃ te yonirṛtvijo yato jāto arocathāḥ / taṃ jānannagna ārohāthā no vardhayā rayimityanena mantreṇā-gnimājighret / eṣa vā agneryoniryaḥ prāṇaṃ gaccha svāṃ yoniṃ gaccha svāhetyevamevaitadha // 2 //

2. Once a person takes the vows of Sanyas, then some people do the fire sacrifice called ‘Prajapatya Yagya’<sup>1</sup>, while others do ‘Agneya Yagya’<sup>2</sup> in order to obtain success in this spiritual endeavour. The latter fire sacrifice is preferred by some because this sacrifice involves worship of the sacred fire, and fire is synonymous with Pran which is a metaphor for life and vitality. This sacrifice honours and glorifies the Pran, and it gives more strength and powers to the Pran of the Sanyasi to help sustain him during the arduous spiritual journey that he is about to undertake.

At the time of these sacrifices, one should offer the three fundamental qualities of Sata, Raja and Tama that are inherently present in all the creatures in different proportions and decide their characters and personalities as offering to the sacred fire<sup>3</sup>. For this purpose, the following Mantras should be said to invoke the blessings of the Fire God—‘Oh Fire God! You are being invited to ignite yourself and burn radiantly with your magnificent splendour in my bosom to enhance my glory and fame, my vitality and strength, my vigour and stamina. The Pran (vital winds that sustain life in a creature) is the factor which ignites and then sustains the eternal fire of life inside my bosom (for air is needed to keep any fire burning). Hence oh Fire God, please be firmly seated in my Pran which is your principal seat of origin, and keep burning there’. [In other words, the aspirant invokes the eternal fire to keep burning inside him and give him sufficient strength, courage, stamina and vigour so that he can overcome the great life of hardships that he would have to endure now onwards after taking the vows of Sanyas. He would not have proper food to eat, no proper place to rest, no bodily comforts that he had been accustomed to in his life as a householder. So the blessing of the Fire God is very important in order to sustain life inside the body through these hard times which he is destined to face as a Sanyasi.] (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *Prajapatya Yagya* is done to propitiate and honour Brahma, the creator and chief guardian of the subjects, the ‘Prajā’, of this creation. It is done in the very beginning of the life of Sanyas. In this sacrifice, all personal belongings are given away as charity. This ensures that the person would have nothing left behind that

could act as an emotional pull after he had taken the vows of renunciation and become a wandering mendicant. This sacrifice also symbolically proclaims that the aspirant is sincere about his vows because he gives everything as charity, even those things that were very dear to him in his days as a householder or a student.

<sup>2</sup>The *Agneya Yagya* is a general fire sacrifice where the patron deity is the Fire God. The aspirant does this sacrifice in order to invoke the Fire God and enshrine him in his own Pran or Atma, i.e. in his vital winds and his pure consciousness.

<sup>3</sup>The aspirant offers his *three qualities* of 'Sata' 'Raja' and 'Tama' to the holy fire as a symbolic gesture that he is burning all his individuality along with all his unique qualities, temperaments and character traits that had marked him as an individual personality. He proclaims that now onwards he is neutral and devoid of any kind of ego, hypocrisy and self pride. This is a symbolic way by which the aspirant burns all his personal traits, ego and pride. He forgets that he has a special personality with special skills, knowledge, powers etc. He forgets that he had built assets and acquired such and such worldly successes before he had decided to literally forgo this claim to name and fame, to rescind his right to enjoy the fruits and comforts of the worldly material assets he had produced or acquired in life by his own hard efforts, and in general treat everything around him as having nothing to do with him. Henceforth, he remains calm, unruffled, unmoving and steady—none of these three Gunas would ever cast their influences upon his character and behaviour. He henceforth remains without any taints that would scar his spiritual reputation. He aspires to become neutral, detached and dispassionate under all circumstances, treating everything with equanimity and forbearance, and this is possible only when all the character traits, all emotions and temperaments, all thoughts processes that are determined by these three qualities are completely annihilated or conquered. Such a person would become tolerant, forgiving, compassionate, magnanimous and full of equanimity and fortitude. He should be exemplary modest, humble, unpretentious, simple, pious, holy and adorable.

Briefly, these three qualities can be summarised as follows:--'Sata Guna' or quality is the noble, virtuous, auspicious and good quality present in a creature. It is marked by such high standards of ethical existence that have, as their characteristic features, such qualities as coolness of head, peace, contentedness, humility, devotion, wisdom, mercy, compassion, creativity, selflessness, service, righteousness, virtuousness, holiness and nobility of thought and action etc. As is evident, these qualities are the best qualities that one can have in him; they have a spiritual dimension to them; they are spiritually uplifting and give a divine halo to those who practice them. (b) 'Raja Guna' or quality covers such qualities as worldly yearnings, passions, stormy nature, agitated behaviour, ambitions, desires, selfishness, expansionist tendencies, desire to sustain etc. All these pertain to this materialistic world. Such qualities give worldly fame and prosperity. If these qualities are judiciously mixed with the Satwic qualities, then they provide the person the better of the two worlds, both in terms of worldly fame as well as spiritual well being. (c) 'Tama Guna' or quality is the third quality; it is the most degrading, denigrating and contemptible of the three characteristics in a person, leading him to such negative traits as sins, vices, perversions, greed, avarice, haughtiness, pride, lust, attachments, yearnings, intoxication, wild behaviour, promiscuity, evils, utter disregard for anything which is righteous, ethical and noble etc.—in brief, immoral, denigrating and depraved behaviour, marked by grossness, crassness and recklessness of misdemeanours. It is the lowest and meanest of the three qualities leading to a person's downfall, ignominy and ruin.

The various permutations and combinations of these three qualities create a particular nature of an individual giving him his individuality and his special characters which are unique to him; they determine his temperament, behaviour, thought process et al. Two individuals having the same external form of the gross body—e.g. two men—might look very much alike but they vary immensely in their

nature, habit, behaviour, thinking, outlook, action and deeds, wisdom and way of living.

These two fire sacrifices are done to ensure success in the new spiritual venture that the aspirant Sanyasi is about to undertake. He does the fire sacrifice because it is done at the beginning of any new enterprise, any new endeavour, or any new exercise in order to invoke divine intercession for successful completion of the entire process and accomplishing one's desired goal without any hindrance. ]

ग्रामादग्निमाहृत्य पूर्ववदग्निमाजिघ्रेत् । यदग्निं न विन्देदप्सु जुहुयादापो वै सर्वा देवताः सर्वाभ्यो देवताभ्यो जुहोमि स्वाहेति हुत्वोद्धृत्य प्राश्नीयात् साज्यं हविरनामयम् । मोक्षमन्त्रैस्त्रय्येवं वेद तद्ब्रह्म तदुपासितव्यम् । शिखां यज्ञोपवीतं छित्वा संन्यस्तं मयेति त्रिवारमुच्चरेत् । एवमेवैतद्भगवन्निति वै याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥३॥

grāmādagnimāhrtya pūrvavadagnimājighret yadagniṃ na vindedapsu juhuyādāpo vai sarvā devatāḥ sarvābhyo devatābhyo juhomi svāheti hutvoddhṛtya prāśnīyāt sājyaṃ haviranāmayam / mokṣamantraistrayyevaṃ veda tadbrahma tadupāsītavyam / śikhāṃ yajñopavītaṃ chittvā saṃnyastaṃ mayeti trivāramuccaret / evamevaitadbhagavanniti vai yājñavalkyaḥ // 3 //

3. (When a person decides to take to the path of Sanyas, he should first perform the Agneya or fire sacrifice as described in verse no. 2.) For this purpose, he should bring a lighted fire (e.g. pieces of burning firewood) from some household in the village. In case the fire is not available, then the formality of the sacrifice can be done using only water because water is said to represent all the Gods in a composite form<sup>1</sup>.

The aspirant should pray as follows—‘I am offering this sacrifice in honour of all the Gods’. Then he should utter the words ‘Swaha’ (which is always said before formally offering anything meant for the deity to the sacred fire) as a token of his offering and a request that it be accepted by the Gods. The left over material used in the sacrifice, called Havi which is usually a mixture of various herbs, sesame seeds, rice grains, barley etc. all mixed together with clarified butter, should then be eaten by the aspirant Sanyasi as sanctified and blessed food. This Havi is said to possess mystical powers that removes all diseases.

(Bṛihad Aranyaka Upanishad describes in detail the entire process of doing a fire sacrifice in its Canto 6, Brahmin 3.)

The aspirant should focus his attention on the great Truths as enunciated by the three Vedas, called the ‘Ved-trayi’, by the means of great Mantras<sup>2</sup>, and realise that the target or aim of all these Vedas and their Mantras is ‘that Brahm’. [That is, the Sanyasi should prepare himself to worship only one ‘truth’ and it is Brahm which is the supreme transcendental Authority in creation and the ultimate place of rest for the soul. The realisation of this Brahm should henceforth be the only aim for the aspirant Sanyasi; he should not waver from this single aim of his life as a Sanyasi, and that is to attain that supreme Truth known as Brahm.]

‘I have accepted the path and vows of Sanyas’—making this proclamation three times (to emphasise his firm resolve and emphatically assert that what he says is the truth), he should discard his sacred thread as well as shave off the tuft of hair on his head.

Sage Yagyavalkya said to Janak, ‘Oh king Janak! This is indeed the dignified way to take to the great spiritual path of Sanyas’ (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This is because *water* is the most important of all the primary elements that are needed to conceive and nurture life. In the beginning of creation itself, there was only ‘Apaha’ meaning water in its elementary form and as a cosmic jelly from which the rest of the visible as well as invisible creation moulded itself. Water is the primary and the most essential ingredient of life. (Refer Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 5/5/1 and 1/2/2.) The different Gods are symbols of the various facets or functions of life; they personify the various powers of Nature that govern the working of creation. Since no life is possible without water, the latter is deemed to incorporate all the Gods symbolising the various powers of Nature that not only conceive life but also nurture and enhance it. That is why in mythology Vishnu, who is a manifestation of the cosmic Viraat Purush, the invisible form of the supreme Lord who has revealed himself as the entire universe, is depicted as reclining on an ocean of milk called Kshir Sagar.

<sup>2</sup>The three primary Vedas are the Rig, Sam and Yajur. The great teachings of the Vedas are incorporated in the various Mantras that form their texts. These Mantras are in the form of hymns, and the three great noble Truths that they proclaim are the following—‘You are I or Me’, ‘I am you’ and ‘I am Brahm’. These three sayings are the result of self-realisation by the Sanyasi, and they are the benchmarks for truly realised and enlightened souls. These sayings have been described in Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, 3/1/6 and 3/2/1 which is the 10<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, and in Shuk Rahasya Upanishad belonging to the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition as its 13<sup>th</sup> Upanishad.]

अथ हैनमत्रिः पप्रच्छ याज्ञवल्क्यं अयज्ञोपवीती कथं ब्राह्मण इति । स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्य इदं  
प्रणवमेवास्य तद्यज्ञोपवीतं य आत्मा । प्राश्याचम्यायं विधिः ॥४॥

atha hainamatriḥ papraccha yājñavalkyaṁ ayajñopavīti katham brāhmaṇa  
iti / sa hovāca yājñavalkya idaṁ praṇavamevāsy tadyajñopavītaṁ ya ātmā /  
prāśyācamyāyaṁ vidhiḥ // 4 //

4. The king once again asked sage Yagyavalkya, ‘Oh sage! How can one remain a Brahmin or can continue to be called a senior person of exalted stature as a Brahmin after he has abandoned the sacred marks, such as the sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the head at the time of taking to the path of Sanyas as described by you (in verse no.3)?’

The sage replied, ‘The divine word OM (and its constant and consistent repetition) is the symbolic sacred thread for a Sanyasi. This OM is the Atma, the pure consciousness, in the real sense for him. A person who does the fire sacrifice as described above (in verse no. 2-3), and then eats the remaining sanctified offering and cleanses his mouth with a sip of water three times—well, this is the only sanctioned way for him to accept the path of Sanyas<sup>1</sup>. There is no need for him to either wear the sacred thread or the hair on the head (4).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>That is, whether or not he is a Brahmin by birth, if a man takes to Sanyas, he is ordained to shed all external signs of his superior birth or knowledge. This is a practice to ensure that after having renounced his ties with the world the aspirant is not left with any vestige of his earlier life. It ensures that he has abandoned all sense of superiority, all complexes, and has instead risen above all stereo types. A Sanyasi is expected to have exemplary modesty who has erased all traces of his past life, all memory of his high birth as a Brahmin, and that he was revered and honoured by

others as a senior and learned person prior to his taking to the path of Sanyas. This is because these considerations do not behove of a person who is supposed to have become enlightened and realised the hollowness of honours that this mundane world bestows upon people depending upon their birth or knowledge. A Sanyasi is an enlightened pilgrim of the path leading to the supreme Brahm, and he is least concerned with such mundane considerations as keeping the sacred thread and the tuft of hair in order to prove his exalted stature in society; in fact he is not bothered about such things because he has realised that none of these external symbols has got anything to do with the realisation of the pure conscious Atma and the ultimate Truth of existence. When the Sanyasi has realised the truth about himself through the three great sayings as narrated in note to verse no. 3, such external signs become not only redundant but also superficial.]

अथ वा परिव्राड्विवर्णवासा मुण्डोऽपरिग्रहः शुचिरद्रोही भैक्षमाणो ब्रह्मभूयाय भवति । एष पन्थाः परिव्राजकानां वीराध्वाने वाऽनाशके वापां प्रवेशे वाग्निप्रवेशे वा महाप्रस्थाने वा । एष पन्था ब्रह्मणा हानुवित्तस्तेनेति स संन्यासी ब्रह्मविदिति । एवमेवैष भगवन्निति वै याज्ञवल्क्य ॥५॥

atha vā parivrāḍvivarṇavāsā muṇḍo'parigrahaḥ śuciradrohī bhaikṣamāṇo brahmabhūyāya bhavati / eṣa panthāḥ parivrājakānāṃ vīrādhvani vā'nāśake vāpāṃ praveśe vāgnipraveśe vā mahāprasthāne vā / eṣa panthā brahmaṇā hānuvittasteneti sa saṃnyāsī brahmaviditi / evamevaiṣa bhagavanniti vai yājñavalkya // 5 //

5. A true Sanyasi (an honest and steady renunciate hermit, ascetic, mendicant, monk or a friar) should wear ochre clothes, have a clean shaved head, not ask or accept anything other than absolutely necessary food, should be exemplarily pure and uncorrupt in every way (i.e. by his deeds, actions, behaviour, mind, body, heart, thoughts, intentions etc.), should not harbour any malice, ill-will, jealousy, hatred, animosity, or any other such negative emotions and thoughts for any creature, and should eat by begging. Such a person, by diligently and carefully walking on this path of Sanyas, is able to attain the supreme stature known as 'Brahm Pad' which is the realisation of the supreme Truth about his own self as the Atma which is pure consciousness and an embodiment of supreme enlightenment. That is why he becomes one like Brahm himself; he becomes a personified image of Brahm, because the Atma is a manifestation of Brahm.

This is the sanctified path or means to be adopted by a Sanyasi; these are the doctrines that are to be followed by him in order to enable him to become Brahm-realised; to make him eligible to acquire the exalted stature of a person who has become one with Brahm. These are the principal guidelines laid down for a Sanyasi who wishes to ultimately accomplish emancipation and salvation for himself by finally ending his life by entering a water body (such as a lake or a river), the fire (such as the funeral pyre lit to burn a dead body, the only difference being that the Sanyasi voluntarily enters it while still alive), dying for a great cause or mission which is called obtaining the 'Vir-Gati' (i.e. the end meant for those who are bold, brave and courageous), and natural death of the body while meditating, called Mahaprasthan. [The word literally means to embark upon the great spiritual path that leads one to final emancipation and salvation.]

In all these ends, though his mortal body perishes, his Atma, which is his truthful and pure self as well as cosmic consciousness called Brahm personified,

continues to live because it is imperishable. This is an enlightened, holistic and dignified view about the ‘self’ and ‘Brahm’ which is very rare to come across and difficult to acquire, but once achieved and realised it makes the Sanyasi well versed in the essential but profound truth about Brahm. In other words, such a Sanyasi becomes Brahm-realised or Brahm personified! [This is because his Atma is a personification of the supreme transcendental authority of creation known as Brahm, and the Sanyasi has realised that it is the Atma which is his truthful identity. So, he is indeed Brahm.]’

Sage Yagyavalkya said—Oh king, this is the way for true Sanyas that I have narrated for you (5).

तत्र परमहंसा नाम संवर्तकारुणिश्चेतकेतुर्वासऋभुनिदाघदत्तात्रेयशुकवामदेवहारीतक  
प्रभृतयोऽव्यक्तलिङ्गाऽव्यक्ताचारा अनुमत्ता उन्मत्तवदाचरन्तः ॥६॥

tatra paramahaṁsā nāma saṁvartakāruṇiśvetaketudurvāsaṛbhunidāgha-  
dattātreyaśukavāmadevahārītaka prabhṛtayo‘vyaktaliṅgā‘vyaktācārā anun-  
mattā unmattavadācarantaḥ // 6 //

6. Now I shall mention the names of some of those great sages who were called Paramhans Sanyasis<sup>1</sup>. These persons had no external symbols of their exalted spiritual stature, no overt signs of their internal divine and accomplished spiritual nature, and no one could judge their true elevated spiritual state of being, mystical powers and auspiciousness by their external behaviours and temperaments. Though outwardly they appeared to be aggressive, arrogant and intoxicated with pride and self assertion, they were really quite the opposite in reality.

Some of such great Sanyasis are the following—Samvartak, Aruni, Shwetketu, Durvasa, Ribhu, Nidagh, Dattatreya, Shuk, Vamedo, Haritak etc. (6).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *Paramhans* is a class of Sanyasi who is superior to ordinary Sanyasi. This term has been elaborately explained in other Upanishads dealing with this subject, notably the Paramhanso-panishad which is the 5<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.]

परस्त्रीपुरपराङ्मुखास्त्रिदण्डं कमण्डलुं भुक्तपात्रं जलपवित्रं शिखां यज्ञोपवीतं बहिरन्तश्चेत्येतत्सर्वं भूः  
स्वाहेत्यप्सु परित्यज्यात्मानमन्विच्छेत् ॥७॥

parastrīpuraparāṅmukhāstridaṇḍaṁ kamaṇḍaluṁ bhuktapātraṁ jala-pavitraṁ  
śikhāṁ yajñopavītaṁ bahirantaścetyetatsarvaṁ bhūḥ svāhetyapsu  
parityajyātmānamanvicchet // 7 //

7. [The following verse nos. 7-13 describe the code of conduct and ethics that a self-respecting and dignified Sanyasi ought to steadfastly follow in order not only to maintain his own prestige and dignity but also to honour the exalted stature and uphold the reputation and dignity of the eclectic institution of Sanyas.]

A Sanyasi should not look at the women of other people, should not stay in a city or town or any other inhabited place, and should discard all his personal possessions and signs, both external as well as internal<sup>1</sup>, that had marked him out as a Sanyasi in the initial stages of Sanyas—such as the Tridand (a thin bamboo staff carried by a Sanyasi which has two short pieces of wood, each measuring about four

fingers in width, tied at the top end as a handle; it derives its name from the three controls that a true Sanyasi is supposed to observe—viz. control over his speech called the Vaag-dand, control over his body called the Kaye-dand and control over his mind called the Mana-dand), the Kamandalu (the water pot), the Bhukta Patra (the pot for accepting food; the begging bowl), the Jalpavitra (the brush made of Kush grass and used to sprinkle water on the body as a purification rite), the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the head), the Yogyopavit (the sacred thread) etc.—into the water (of a river, a stream, a lake, a pond or any other water body available) by pronouncing the word ‘Bhu Swaha’ (which means that I am paying obeisance to earth, or Bhu, by offering these things to it as my sacrificial offering, or Swaha).

Having done this, he should constantly, consistently and persistently contemplate and meditate upon his Atma, his pure conscious self, and delve into its pure nature as the supreme transcendental Brahm personified (7).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The external signs are mentioned in this verse, and they are the Tridand, Kamandalu, Bhukta Patra, Jalpavatri, Shikha and Yogyapavit. The internal signs refer to the latent Vasanas or worldly passions, desires, yearnings and lusts, as well as Vrittis or the temperaments, tendencies, habits and inclinations that are inherent to all living beings and together mould its behaviour, character traits and personality. The external signs are easy to discard, but equally important is the elimination of the internal ones because it is the latter that actually impedes one’s spiritual progress for the simple reason that they directly affect his mind and intellect. The various Vasanas and Vrittis are like enemies hidden within the rank of the army, and unless and until they are dealt with judiciously and expeditiously, they are bound to cause nuisance for the Sanyasi. So he should endeavour to assiduously cast aside all such things that act as a bind or impediment in his spiritual progress and freedom—whether they are external symbols mentioned in the main text, or the internal fetters of the mind, intellect and the heart as noted in this note.

Earlier, verse no. 3 has said that if fire is not available, the Sanyasi should offer his oblations to the water because water incorporates all the Gods. Earth as well as the different water bodies such as the river and stream, are the two elements in Nature which are always present in a visible gross form. Both the earth and the water can be touched and felt. There are two symbolic offerings made simultaneously here—one to the *earth* and the other to the *water*. By uttering the words Bhu Swaha, the Sanyasi symbolically burns all the vestiges of his worldly life by offering them to the latent fire present inside the earth and then disperses their remains or ashes into the water. Aside of this, by offering all his external symbols to the water, the Sanyasi literally washes his hands from them for good. He washes his hands from all vestiges of his links with the external world, for now he has only his body and his Atma as his only possession. In the earlier stages of Sanyas, the Sanyasi is ordained to carry all the external signs that are mentioned in verse no. 7, but as he progresses in his spiritual journey, as he matures and rises higher and higher in his spiritual pursuits, these seem cumbersome to him and appear like a burden for him. He begins to treat them much the same way as he has been treating other material possessions of the world. They become more of a hindrance rather than an aid. So he voluntarily chucks them, he disowns them, he discards them in order to feel light and free in his journey.]

यथा जातरूपधरा निर्वृन्द्वा निष्परिग्रहास्तत्त्वब्रह्ममार्गे सम्यक्संपन्नाः शुद्धमानसाः प्राणसंधारणार्थं  
यथोक्तकाले विमुक्तो भैक्षमाचरन्नुदरपात्रेण लाभालाभौ समौ भूत्वा करपात्रेण वा कमण्डलूदकपो  
भैक्षमाचरन्नुदरमात्रसंग्रहः पात्रान्तरशून्यो जलस्थलक मण्डलुरबाधकरहः स्थलनिकेतनो लाभालाभौ समौ  
भूत्वा शून्यागार देवगृहतृणकूट वल्मीकवृक्षमूलकुलालशालाग्निहोत्र शालानदीपुलिनगिरि कुहरकोटर

कन्दरनिर्झर स्थण्डि लेखनिकेतनिवास्यप्रयत्नः शुभाशुभकर्मनिर्मूलनपरः संन्यासेन देहत्यागं करोति स परमहंसो नामेति ॥८॥

yathā jātarūpadharā nirdvandvā niṣparigrahāstattvabrahmamārge  
samyaksaṃpannāḥ śuddhamānasāḥ prāṇasandhāraṇārthaṃ yathoktakāle  
vimukto bhaikṣamācarannudarapātreṇa lābhālābhau samau bhūtvā kara-  
pātreṇa vā kamaṇḍalūdakapo bhaikṣamācarannudaramātrasaṃgrahaḥ  
pātrāntaraśūnyo jalasthalakamaṇḍalurabādhakarahaḥ sthalaniketano lābhā-  
lābhau samau bhūtvā śūnyāgāra devagrhatṛṇakūṭa valmīkavr̥kṣamūlakulāla-  
śālāgnihoṭra śālānadīpulinagiri kuharakoṭara kandaranirjhara sthaṇḍi-  
leṣvaniketaniṣyaprayatnaḥ śubhāśubhakarmanirmūlanaparaḥ saṃnyāseṇa  
dehatyāgaṃ karoti sa paramahaṃso nāmeti // 8 //

8. A Sanyasi should wear minimum of clothes (e.g. just a loin cloth), should remain even, calm, unruffled, poised and equitable during opposing, contradictory and adverse circumstances (such as hot and cold, sorrows and joys, pains and comforts, praises and insults), maintain his poise and be free from all agitations, perplexities and consternations, should not have any worldly possessions of any kind, should be of a pure and clean heart that is diligently and honestly engrossed in following the spiritual path of Brahm realisation, should beg for food and eat just enough to sustain his life, called his Pran, should not be bothered about either loss or gain, should use a hollowed out coconut shell or his cupped palms to accept food during his begging forays, and drink water from the water pot (made from hollowed out pumpkin). He should roam about freely and cheerfully in this world, all the while voluntarily and gladly observing these rules.

He should seek food which is just enough to fill his stomach for the time being, and should not stock anything to eat later. For residence, he should select a secluded, calm and serene place where he won't face any hurdle in his spiritual thoughts or have any disturbance to his peace. Some of the places from which he should select for his temporary abode are an abandoned and ruined building, a temple/shrine, a thatched hut, an anthill, the shade of a tree, a potter's hut, the site of a fire sacrifice, the bank of a river, inside a cave, on a huge boulder near a waterfall, etc.

He should gradually annihilate his deeds and their effects by diverting his mind away from them, and when he finally abandons his mortal body after having faithfully and diligently followed the rigorous path as laid down for a Sanyasi, he is proclaimed as a 'Paramhans' (literally, the one who is like the great bird Swan which is considered as the purest and wisest bird as it picks only the best from what is available; here it refers to the fact that he has achieved the most exalted stature reserved for highly acclaimed Sanyasis) (8).

आशाम्बरो न नमस्कारो न दारपुत्राभिलाषी लक्ष्यालक्ष्यनिर्वर्तकः परिव्राट् परमेश्वरो भवति । अत्रैते श्लोका भवन्ति ॥९॥

āśāmbaro na namaskāro na dāraputrābhilāṣī lakṣyālakṣyanirvartakaḥ parivrāt  
parameśvaro bhavati / atraite ślokā bhavanti // 9 //



9. Wearing his skin as his only cloth (i.e. remaining naked), he sees the same Brahm in all the creatures, and therefore does not deem it necessary and fit to bow before anybody<sup>1</sup>. He should remain indifferent and dispassionate towards his family, including his wife, children etc. He should deliberately forsake all dealings in this world and have nothing to do with anything, whether visible or invisible, tangible or intangible. [That is, he should remain mentally and emotionally neutral, stoic, dispassionate, detached and disassociated while living in this world, and possess such noble qualities as equanimity, evenness of mind and thoughts, equality in behaviour towards all the creatures when interacting with them, and possess other such noble and auspicious virtues that are possessed by great souls.]

Such an exalted Sanyasi is indeed equivalent to the Parmeshwar, the supreme Lord<sup>2</sup> (9).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>It is not because he is haughty and hypocrite but because he sees an image of himself in the other creature; or he remains so engrossed in meditating upon the supreme Brahm that he is oblivious of the presence of another person; or since he has realised that the truthful form of all the creatures is not their body but their Atma which is Brahm personified, and that he himself is an image of that Brahm, he finds nothing superior in the other person for which he should bow before him. Further, by remaining naked he does not mean any indecency or immodesty, but only stresses the point that he has nothing to hide about himself, and that he sees all bodies alike, whether that body belongs to a young women or an old man. After all, the skin is the natural cover provided by the creator to protect the body from the vagaries of Nature, and therefore there is no need to add additional layers of clothes to wrap it; it is like trying to protect something from getting wet that has already been wrapped in a length of plastic sheet with another sheet, which is a stupid act. See verse no. 10-13 below.

<sup>2</sup>This deduction is easy to understand because the supreme Lord does not distinguish between any two individuals and treats all the creatures alike. The supreme Lord or Brahm has the sky as his cloth, and he remains uniformly and universally distributed throughout the length and breadth of the creation, being present in those things that are visible as well as those that are not visible. True Brahm-realisation in a Sanyasi arises when he begins to think this way.]

यो भवेत्पूर्वसंन्यासी तुल्यो वै धर्मतो यदि । तस्मै प्रणामः कर्तव्यो नेतराय कदाचन ॥१०॥

yo bhavetpūrvasaṁnyāsī tulyo vai dharmato yadi /  
tasmai praṇāmaḥ kartavyo netarāya kadācana // 10 //

10. A Sanyasi should bow (i.e. honour, pay his obeisance and show his respects) only to such people who have taken the vows of Sanyas prior to him (as they are more experienced and senior to him in the spiritual path), or to them who are Dharma personified (i.e. those persons who exemplify the virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, probity, propriety, nobility of thoughts and conduct). Except these people, he should not bow before anyone else (10).

प्रमादिनो बहिश्चित्ताः पिशुनाः कलहोत्सुकाः । संन्यासिनोऽपि दृश्यन्ते वेदसंदूषिताशयाः ॥११॥

pramādino bahiścittāḥ piśunāḥ kalahotsukāḥ /

saṁnyāsino'pi drśyante devasaṁdūṣitāśayāḥ // 11 //

11. It is not unusual to see a Sanyasi who is disgraced and fallen from his chosen path, who is indolent and lazy, who has diverted and gone astray from his righteous path, who is extrovert, talks a lot, is showy and pretentious, who is indulgent in pursuit of sensual gratification and seeking pleasures like an animal, who is fond of conflicts and has a predilection for unnecessary quarreling, discussions, debates, arguments and brawls even at trifles and inconsequential matters that should not bother him at all in the first place, and who wrongly interprets the tenets of the Vedas and the great doctrines of the other scriptures and their intentions (i.e. he misrepresents and misconstrues what the scriptures say to suit his own personal goals and vested interests) (11).

[Note—The intention of this verse is to highlight the fact that merely taking to the path of Sanyas is no guarantee of spiritual success in self-realisation and Brahm-realisation as well as achieving liberation and deliverance from the fetters that tie down the soul of a creature to this deluding world, for there are numerous examples when a man was better off before he took the vows of Sanyas, for indulging in things that are prohibited for a Sanyas way of life are only counter-productive and tantamount to cheating one's own self. They not only demote the Sanyasi and make him an object of scorn and ridicule but demean the entire holy institution of Sanyas. It is like defiling, polluting and corrupting this holy institution. Therefore, it's an unpardonable sin. The bad example of one Sanyasi would boomerang and cause dishonour for all other innocent and sincere Sanyasis who may otherwise be immaculate and as holy and pious as they can be.]

नामादिभ्यः परे भूमि स्वराज्ये चेत्स्थितोऽद्वये । प्रणमेत्कं तदात्मज्ञो न कार्यं कर्मणा तदा ॥१२॥

nāmādibhyaḥ pare bhūmni svārājye cetsthito'dvathe /  
praṇametkaṁ tadātmajñō na kāryaṁ karmaṇā tadā // 12 //

12. An exalted Sanyasi who transcends the limitations and restrictions as well as expectations imposed by such mundane things as having a name or title (such as being called a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, a Vaishya or a Shudra), a (permanent) residence (such as a hermitage, a monastery etc.), having some or the other vocation or profession (such as a preacher, a preceptor, a spiritual guide or even being a monk or a spiritual healer) and stage of life (such as childhood, adulthood, old age etc.), who is established in an exalted position in the higher echelons of Sanyas-hood (i.e. is a celebrated Sanyasi), who stays in the realm where he is the sovereign (i.e. he is subjected to no worldly compulsions and formalities where he needs to appease anyone or do something against his wish), who firmly believes in the concept of non-duality and therefore sees nothing else other than the 'self' everywhere, who has a steady and unwavering mind and intellect not subject to various dilemmas, confusions, vexations and perplexities, and who is engrossed and well steeped in the knowledge of the self or the awareness of the Atma which is pure consciousness—say, why should he bow before anybody else because he sees his own image, his own Atma in all the rest of the creation. For such a Sanyasi, no formal work is left to be done or formalities to be observed in this world (12).

ईश्वरो जीवकलया प्रविष्टो भगवानिति । प्रणमेदण्डवद्भूमावाञ्चण्डालगोखरम् ॥१३॥

īśvaro jīvakalayā praviṣṭo bhagavāniti /  
praṇameddaṇḍavadbhūmāvāśva-caṇḍālagokharam // 13 //

13. [An erudite and enlightened person who is aware of the non-dual nature of the Atma and the fact that all the creatures are essentially the same because all have the same Atma residing inside their bosom and marking their identity—there is no one more worthy than himself who should be shown more respect than that shown to one's own self or one's own Atma. That is why he does not bow before others.] But in case he decides to bow and pay his obeisance to someone, then he would have no second thoughts or hesitations before bowing before a horse, a chandal (a low caste), a cow, or even a donkey. This is because he is firmly convinced that the supreme Lord called Ishwar is present in all the living beings uniformly as their Jiva or the essential element called 'life' that is universally present in all things that 'live' in this creation. Therefore, all the creatures are manifestations of the same Lord for an enlightened Sanyasi, and he does not distinguish between any two creatures depending upon the body that they possess (13).

[Note—What a fantastic and superb observation! A person who has honestly reached this state of equanimity and enlightenment so as to see no difference between a man and a horse—not because he is out of his senses and gone nuts, but because he sees beyond their physical bodies to see the Atma residing inside it—is indeed Brahm-realised. This view is Advaita Vedanta in practice. ]

मांसपाञ्चालिकायास्तु यन्त्रलोकेऽङ्गपञ्जरे । स्नाय्वस्थिग्रन्थिशालिन्याः स्त्रियाः किमिव शोभनम् ॥१४॥

māṁsapāñcālikāyāstu yantraloke'ṅgapañjare /  
snāyvasthigranthiśālīnyāḥ striyāḥ kimiva śobhanam // 14 //

14. [The following verses are meant to address the weakest point in the defensive armour of any man, the weakest point in his character because it is one lust which he finds almost overbearing and difficult to overcome. A man can overcome his desire for worldly fame, money, material comforts and pleasures, but it is rather difficult to easily overcome the temptation offered by a female.]

A women's body is made up of flesh and marrow, and is like a carry-bag consisting of the stomach filled with veins, bones and various internal organs. This bag goes here and there without any particular objective. Say, what is so alluring in this body? What is so charming and adorable in it? (14).

त्वङ्मांसरक्तवाष्पाम्बु पृथक्कृत्वा विलोचने । समालोकय रम्यं चेतिकं मुधा परिमुह्यसि ॥१५॥

tvaṁmāṁsaraktavāṣpāmbu prṭhakkṛtvā vilocane /  
samālokaya ramyaṁ cetkiṁ mudhā parimuhyasi // 15 //

15. Separate all the individual parts of the body of a woman and look at them individually—the skin, the flesh, the blood, the tears and the eyes. Do they at all look

charming and adorable? If not, say then, why do you become so infatuated and enamoured by her? Why are you so enchanted and lured by her? (15).

मेरुशृङ्गतोल्लासिगङ्गाजलयोपमा । दृष्टा यस्मिन्मुने मुक्ताहारस्योल्लासशालिता ।१६॥

meruśṛṅgataṭollāsigaṅgājalasyopamā /  
dr̥ṣṭā yasminmune muktāhāra-syollāsaśālītā // 16 //

16. The garland hanging around her robust, muscular and well-formed breasts is comparable to the stream of the river Ganges cascading down from the peaks of mount Meru. Truly indeed, this garland or necklace resembles that stream (16).

[Note: Here, the 'breasts' are compared to the high mountains and their peaks, while the white garland swaying between them is like the frothy waters of river Ganges rushing down their slopes.]

श्मशानेषु दिगन्तेषु स एव ललनास्तनः । श्वभिरास्वाद्यते काले लघुपिण्ड इवान्धसः ।१७॥

śmanāneṣu diganteṣu sa eva lalanāstanah /  
śvabhirāsvādyate kāle laghupiṇḍa ivāndhasaḥ // 17 //

17. The breast of a woman severed from her body and lying unattended in a cremation ground, or lying randomly at any other place, is fed upon by stray dogs as if they were ordinary dog-feed or lump of meat (17).

केशकज्जलधारिण्यो दुःस्पर्शा लोचनप्रियाः । दुष्कृताग्निशिखा नार्यो दहन्ति तृणवन्नरम् ।१८॥

keśakajjaladhāriṇyo duḥsparśā locanapriyāḥ /  
duṣkṛtāgnīśikhā nāryo dahanti ṭṛṇavannaram // 18 //

18. A woman with beautifully plaited hairs, eyes adorned with a paint of lampblack (*collyrium*), difficult to touch (i.e. difficult to please and access, and therefore igniting greater desire and longing), most pleasing and enticing for the eyes of the beholder, and who is like a burning flame of a candle—such a woman is potent enough to reduce a man to ashes just like a twig is burned as soon as it comes in contact with a raging fire (18).

ज्वलिता अतिदूरेऽपि सरसा अपि नीरसाः । स्त्रियो हि नरकाग्नीनामिन्धनं चारु दारुणम् ।१९॥

jvalitā atidūre'pi sarasā api nīrasāḥ /  
striyo hi narakāgnīnāmindhanaṃ cāru dāruṇam // 19 //

19. A woman can be tormenting and scorching even from a distance (just like a blazing fire). Though women appear very amiable, friendly, sweet, tender and

attractive, they have the potential to suck out the sap of vitality and vigour from the person who falls in the alluring trap of their deceptive charm. They resemble the firewood of hell; they are no less tormenting than the hell itself though they appear to be sweet and enticing like a sweet and cold pudding (19).

कामनाम्ना किरातेन विकीर्णा मुग्धचेतसः । नार्यो नरविहङ्गानामङ्गबन्धनवागुराः ॥२०॥

kāmanāmnā kirātena vikīrṇā mugdhacetasah /  
nāryo naravihaṅgānāmaṅgabandhanavāgurāḥ // 20 //

20. The hunter in the guise of Kamdeo-cupid (the patron god of lust, passions, beauty, sensual pleasures, physical attractions and longing), in order to trap a man who is like a bird, has cast his net represented by a woman who has a natural aptitude to charm a man's heart and thereby lure him towards the net (20).

जन्मपल्वलमत्स्यानां चित्तकर्दमचारिणाम् । पुंसां दुर्वासनारज्जुनारी बडिशपिण्डिका ॥२१॥

janmapalvalamatsyānāṃ cittakardamacāriṇām /  
puṃsāṃ durvāsanārajjur-nārī baḍīśapiṇḍikā // 21 //

21. For men who are like fish swimming and squirming around in the filthy slush and scum representing the lustful tendencies of their heart, in a pond representing birth in this entrapping world, a woman is like a bait attached to the hook, representing various Vasanas (passions and lustfulness, desires for carnal pleasures and sensual gratification), of the fishing rod (21).

सर्वेषा दोषरत्नानां सुसमुद्रिकयानया । दुःखशृङ्खलया नित्यमलमस्तु मम स्त्रिया ॥२२॥

sarveṣāṃ doṣaratnānāṃ susamudgikayānayā /  
duḥkhaśṛṅkhalayā nityama-lamastu mama striyā // 22 //

22. Only God can protect a man from a woman symbolising a basket of worthless and faulty pieces of gems representing sorrows, sufferings, torments and miseries of all hues (22).

[Note—The man thinks that a beautiful damsel by his side, clinging to his arms, would enhance his value in society just like a basket full of gems slung across his shoulders is an asset worth flaunting and being proud of. But he is unaware of the fact that the same basket would be the cause of much problem for him as it would arouse jealousy amongst his peers who would try every trick they know to divest him with the treasure, even if the basket is full of artificial gems. It creates suspicion and may even land him in great trouble by inviting thieves; he may be accused of getting it by some unscrupulous means, or even cheating others by misrepresenting facts and pretending them to be genuine gems. Worst, if he is weak, his treasured basket would be snatched in front his eyes and usurped by someone stronger than him, leading to endless heart-burn, a sense of inferiority complex, of being impotent, of jealousy,

hatred, animosity and strife. What good is such a basket of gems to him? Likewise, what good is such a woman to him, because the same types of problems would be created.]

यस्य स्त्री तस्य भोगेच्छा निःस्त्रीकस्य क्व भोगभूः । स्त्रियं त्यक्त्वा जगत्त्यक्तं जगत्त्यक्त्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥२३॥

yasya strī tasya bhogecchā niḥstrīkasya kva bhogabhūḥ /  
striyaṃ tyaktvā jagattyaktaṃ jagattyaktvā sukhī bhavet // 23//

23. A person who happens to be in constant contact (company) of a woman is lured or incited or cajoled or provoked to enjoy her, but a person who has no contact with a woman, say with whom would he enjoy and gratify his sensual desires? Indeed, if a man can forsake the company of a woman, he has forsaken the world along with all its traps, its allurements, its attractions and its charms for all practical purposes. And when a man has forsaken the world and its charms as well as its agonies and sufferings, its troubles and tribulations, he naturally obtains abiding peace and happiness (23).

[Note—This is because he would be free from so many sins that he would otherwise ordinarily commit just in order to please his lady; he would not be trapped into raising a family and get bogged down in its upkeep and spend his entire life in the turmoil that follows. Devoid of mental agitations and sexual arousals, he would be left to himself in peace, preserve his vitality and energy, and can then divert his immense potentials to do something constructive for the rest of the society instead of being selfish about his woman and family. When a man is in eyeshot and earshot of anything that is alluring then it is natural for him as a human being to fall for it, and even if he is able to control his natural instincts then this effort alone would sap a lot of his energy. So a man who has nothing to do with woman is indeed a lucky man whose spiritual journey becomes all the easier.]

अलभ्यमानस्तनयः पितरौ क्लेशयेच्चिरम् । लब्धो हि गर्भपातेन प्रसवेन च बाधते ॥२४॥

alabhyamānastanayaḥ pitarau kleśayecciram /  
labdho hi garbhapātena prasavena ca bādhate // 24 //

24. Even a son is the one who gives, or is the cause of so many pains, sorrows and sufferings. Without a son parents are very uneasy and frustrated; they yearn for at least one son. When a son is somehow conceived, there is the fear of abortion and the horrors of the excruciating pain of delivery at the time of his birth (24).

जातस्य ग्रहरोगादि कुमारस्य च धूर्तता । उपनीतेऽप्यविद्यत्वमनुद्वाहश्च पण्डिते ॥२५॥

jātasya graharogādi kumārasya ca dhūrtatā /  
upanīte'pyavidyatvamanudvāhaśca paṇḍite // 25 //

25. If somehow the son manages to get born (i.e. is not pre-maturely aborted), he is tormented and afflicted by a host of problems such as diseases and the bad effects of malignant stars etc. If he manages to survive these, there is a good chance that he might go wayward and become mischievous and out of control for his parents, causing them immense frustration, dismay, distress, consternation and perplexity; he might become a liability for them. Though he is formally initiated by a wise teacher and sincere attempts are made to educate him, he might still remain stupid and ignorant. Even if these problems do not crop up, then his marriage might become difficult and irksome (25).

यूनश्च परदारादि दारिद्र्यं च कुटुम्बिनः । पुत्रदुःखस्य नास्त्यन्तो धनी चेन्म्रियते तदा ॥२६॥

yūnaśca paradārādi dāridryaṃ ca kuṭumbinaḥ /  
putraduḥkhasya nāstyanto dhanī cenmriyate tadā // 26 //

26. Besides the above, there is the constant fear of his becoming sexually pervert and promiscuous. Even if everything else goes alright and he eventually gets married and manages to raise a family, there are the problems associated with the rearing of a large family, such as arranging for their feeding, upkeep and general welfare. Thus there is no count of sufferings and pains, of troubles and tribulations that have their cause in the son, or are associated with the desire to have a son.

Further, it is also observed that many rich people do not have offspring or heirs, and even if they have they die prematurely. These are some of the innumerable miseries associated with the son (26).

[Note—It must be noted here that a man gets a son only when he is sexually associated with a woman, and this Upanishad on the life and times of a Sanyasi expressly prohibits such company. The troubles associated with having a son are pointed out to emphasise the fact that the culmination of a man's relationship with a woman is the family with a son as its crown jewel, and the great hope that the son would take care of the father during his old age. If peace and comfort is not destined for him, then merely having a son is no guarantee of peace and happiness. On the contrary, it might only add to his woes. So it is better for him to avoid a woman altogether.]

न पाणिपादचपलो न नेत्रचपलो यतिः । न च वाक्चपलश्चैव ब्रह्मभूतो जितेन्द्रियः ॥२७॥

na pāṇipādacapalo na netracapalo yatīḥ /  
na ca vākcapalaścaiva brahmabhūto jitendriyaḥ // 27 //

27. An ascetic's hands, legs, eyes and speech should not be fickle and restless, wondering here and there in a freakish manner, jumping from this object to that. He should be fully in control of his sense organs. It is only then that he can fulfill the grand vows of Brahmacharya (celibacy, continence, abstinence and self restraint from all indulgences, especially those related with sensual pleasures and carnal gratification) (27).

रिपौ बद्धे स्वदेहे च समैकात्म्यं प्रपश्यतः । विवेकिनः कुतः कोपः स्वदेहावयवेष्विव ॥२८॥

ripau baddhe svadehe ca samaikātmyaṁ prapaśyataḥ /  
vivekinaḥ kutaḥ kopāḥ svadehāvayaveṣviva // 28 //

28. An erudite, wise, sagacious, enlightened and knowledgeable Sanyasi who sees no difference between an enemy and his body that is tied by the various shackles pertaining to this deluding world (i.e. who treats his own body as his greatest enemy rather than some other person as being the enemy), never gets annoyed and angry at others even as he does not get peeved and angry at his own body and its various organs (28).

[Note--This is obvious, because every living being loves his body more than anything else. Since a wise ascetic treats his body as having an independent existence than his true self which is the Atma, he begins to see the various faults that are associated with the body as he would see them in an enemy. Even as an enemy creates constant worry and annoyance and is the cause of perpetual restlessness for a person, the Sanyasi also treats his body as a shackle and an annoying burden that prevents him from finding liberation and deliverance as well as peace and happiness of mind. The body constantly keeps nagging at him for food when it is hungry, for water when it is thirsty, for rest when it is tired, for warmth when it is too cold for it to cope with, etc. The body has the mind as its subtle component, and this mind is known to be more restless than the gross body itself, jumping from one subject to another subject in a constant cycle of thoughts and counter-thoughts. In such a scenario, there is no chance for the Sanyasi to ever find eternal peace. That is why the body is treated as an enemy because the latter also robs a man of his peace and happiness.]

अपकारिणि कोपश्चत्कोपे कोपः कथं न ते । धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणां प्रसह्य परिपन्थिनि ॥२९॥

apakāriṇi kopaścetkope kopāḥ katham na te /  
dharmārthakāmamokṣāṇāṁ prasahya paripanthini // 29 //

29. A person who shows anger and vengeance on other people should be asked why he not vents his anger and wrath on these emotions of anger and vengefulness themselves. [That is, why doesn't he control his own anger, wrathfulness and vengefulness instead of venting these negative emotions on others, especially when it is an established fact that the same Atma resides in all the creatures? Is he not aware of the tenet proclaimed in verse no. 28 above that the greatest enemy of a person is his own body? ]

This tendency to be angry, wrathful and vengeful is the greatest obstacle and deterrent in accomplishing success in any worldly enterprise (because it creates ill-will, hatred and animosity instead of amity and goodwill, and the former can never be conducive to any success whatsoever in any field in this world). Besides this, anger, wrathfulness and vengefulness are the greatest hurdles in obtaining the rewards or fruits of any endeavour, such as Artha (financial wellbeing), Dharma (the auspicious benefits of righteousness, nobility of thoughts and conduct, probity and propriety), Kaam (fulfilment of worldly desires) and Moksha (obtaining emancipation and salvation) (29).



नमोऽस्तु मम कोपाय स्वाश्रयज्वालने भृशम् । कोपस्य मम वैराग्यदायिने दोषबोधने ॥३०॥

namo'stu mama kopāya svāśrayajvāline bhr̥śam /  
kopasya mama vairāgya-dāyine doṣabodhine // 30 //

30. I repeatedly bow (in sarcasm and satirically) before this element of 'Kop' (anger, wrath, vengefulness) which has the majestic powers to undercut and destroy with impunity one's self respect, dignity, prestige and standing in society, and literally reduce him to ashes (because everything done by him fails as he gets no support from anyone; he is filled with frustration leading to depression of spirit and lack of enthusiasm which is an important factor for success in any enterprise).

I repeatedly pay my obeisance to 'Kop' which has made me aware of my shortcomings and failures.

[This is because I find others who are more cool-headed and friendly succeeding in fields where I have failed, inspiring me to analyse the causes of my failures. It is then that I realise that my tendency to become angry at trifles has ruined my reputation and made me hated and shunned. This realisation kindles disgust and dismay in me towards my own faults and failings which has been the cause of my failure in obtaining success in acquiring the above four fruits for my endeavours in this world.]

This failure to acquire the four fruits has spurred a sense of renunciation and disinterest in me about all things pecuniary and pertaining to this mundane world.

[Had I been a successful man in my worldly enterprises, I would have remained surrounded by a host of worldly goodies and remained engrossed in enjoying these four fruits. Failure has instilled a sense of renunciation in me, albeit a forced one or one induced by circumstances. But nevertheless anger has been at the forefront of my getting disillusioned from this world as I have lost all my friends and am surrounded by enemies. People shun me, I am not welcome anywhere, I am filled with frustration and dismay. And all these factors have been conducive in my losing all interests in this world. That is why I thank my anger for kindling renunciation and dispassion in me, though for all the wrong reasons, but nevertheless for my long term good.] (30).

यत्र सुप्ता जना नित्यं प्रबुद्धस्तत्र संयमी । प्रबुद्धा यत्र ते विद्वान्सुषुप्तिं याति योगिराट् ॥३१॥

yatra suptā janā nityaṃ prabuddhastatra saṃyamī /  
prabuddhā yatra te vidvānsuṣuptiṃ yāti yogirāṭ // 31 //

31. When ordinary people 'sleep' (i.e. when they lose control of their senses and become impotent in doing anything while asleep; when they literally let down their guard), a self restrained and self controlled man (such as an ascetic, a friar, a monk, a mendicant, a hermit etc.) remains 'awake' (i.e. he remains alert and vigilant). On the contrary, when ordinary people 'keep awake' (i.e. when they remain engrossed by their body and mind in pursuing the world during their waking state of consciousness), such self realised and enlightened Yogis (ascetics) are 'sleeping soundly' in a state called Sushupta (i.e. they are in a state of deep sleep state of consciousness which is a symbolic state when the conscious is totally removed from the delusions created by this material world of sense objects and remains oblivious of them) (31).

[Note—When ordinary people are ignorant of what is happening around them as when they are asleep, i.e. when they are ignorant of the truth and reality of this world

and themselves, an ascetic remains conscious of the truth and reality. On the other hand, when these ordinary people think that they are conscious of the world around them which they think, in their ignorance and delusions, is the real thing, the ascetic literally shuns such ignorant based deluding conceptions and prefers to be asleep and remain ignorant as far as the existence of this mirage is concerned. They shut their eyes to all the alluring charms and temptations of the world while an ordinary man indulges in the same world like a fish taking to water. This 'sleeping' and 'remaining awake' are only metaphors to highlight metaphysical principles concerning what is the truth and reality and what is simply delusion and mirage.]

चिदिहास्तीति चिन्मात्रमिदं चिन्मयमेव च । चित्त्वं चिदहमेते च लोकाश्चिदिति भावय ॥३२॥

cidihāstīti cinmātramidaṃ cinmayameva ca /  
cittvaṃ cidahamete ca lokāściditi bhāvaya // 32 //

32. An ascetic should be firmly convinced that he is pure consciousness personified, that the entire creation is nothing else but a manifestation of the eternal Spirit or consciousness, and this entity is immutable, infinite and uniform. 'I am the same "pure cosmic Consciousness" that is also revealed in the form of the rest of the creation, and is eternal, immaculate and supreme.' (32).

यतीनां तदुपादेयं पारहंस्यं परं पदम् । नातः परतरं किञ्चिद्विद्यते मुनिपुङ्गव इत्युपनिषत् ॥३३॥

॥ इति याज्ञवल्क्योपनिषद् ॥

yatīnāṃ tadupādeyaṃ pārahaṃsyaṃ paraṃ padam / nātaḥ parataraṃ  
kiñcidvidyate munipuṅgavaḥ / ityupaniṣat // 33 //

// thus ends Yagyavalkya Upanishad //

33. The most exalted sage (Yagyavalkya) asserted that the tenets of this Upanishad proclaim that obtaining the ultimate emancipation and salvation of the soul should be the final and only goal of an enlightened, erudite and wise ascetic; there is nothing more better to aim for, and nothing more exalted in stature than it. Thus ends this Upanishad propounded and expounded by the great sage (Yagyavalkya). Amen! (34).

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A brief life sketch of sage Yagyavalka

Sage Yagyavalkya belonged to that Vedic period when people had an integral and holistic view of life and the reality behind existence, and all-activities, secular or religious, were regarded as one big, wholesome and composite religious sacrifice called a Yagya. Life itself was consecrated and devoted to the realization of the transcendental and supreme truthful Reality. There was no distinction between renunciation and involvement in life's chores. There was no dichotomy between the two, and the various debates arising in Indian spiritual practices due to different interpretations and re-interpretations of the Vedic and Upanishadic tenets was a product of the later period. One such exemplary sage and seer belonging to that golden period was Yagyavalkya—he was an enlightened wise man who was not only a self-realised householder but an ardent ascetic, an acclaimed scholar and an exemplary renunciate man par-excellence, all at the same time.

It is believed that Yagyavalkya was an incarnation of Lord Brahma, the creator, when he was cursed by Lord Shiva. [Skand Puran, Nagar Khand, 1-9.] His father was named Brahmabahu (literally, the limbs of Brahma, because the latter's limbs had manifested as this person). [Vayu Puran, 61.] But according to a book of religious law written by Yagyavalkya himself known as 'Yagyavalkya Sanhita', his father also had the same name. So, our Yagyavalkya was, in effect, 'Yagyavalkya, the second'. [Yagyavalkya Sanhita, 1.]

Yagyavalkya's teacher in the science of Yoga (meditation) and the knowledge of the self (metaphysics and philosophy) was sage Vashistha, son of Hiranyanabha Kaushalya, a king of the Raghu dynasty which ruled Ayodhya in ancient times. [Vayu Puran, 88; Bhagwat Mahapurana, 93/106.] The sage performed severe penances and austerities, known as Tapa, at Mithila, the birth place of Sita, the divine consort of Lord Ram. [Skandpuran, Reva Khand, 42.]

He used to attend the court of great ancient wise kings, such as king Janak (the father of Sita—Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, canto 3-4) and Yudhisthir (of the Mahabharat fame—Mahabharat, Sabha Parva, 4/32). It was in the court of king Janak that Yagyavalkya had defeated all the assembled scholars of the time on various metaphysical and theological concepts. He is also believed to be a chief priest in Yudhisthir's Rajsu Yagya.

Sage Yagyavalkya was one of the greatest, most erudite, wise and renowned seers of his time. He was a senior and enlightened man, so wise and learned a scholar that even king Janak, who himself was a most self-realised and enlightened king of his era, was so much bowled over by his erudition, depth of knowledge and scholarship that he accepted the sage's discipleship (refer Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 4, Brahmin 2, verse nos. 1, 4). He was proclaimed the undisputed champion and winner in a metaphysical and theological debate held in the court of Janak during the course of a great fire sacrifice held where great scholars, seers and sages from far and wide had assembled (refer Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahmin 1-9).

He was a much sought after teacher and an honoured exponent of the eclectic Advaita Vedanta philosophy of non-duality. This basically propounds, inter alia, that everything in existence, visible or invisible, minute or colossal, important or unimportant, are all fundamentally the same singular unit called Brahm manifested in myriad and diverse ways, that therefore nothing that exists which is not Brahm is not true, that this Brahm is the only supreme Authority and Divinity in the entire creation, that this Brahm and the individual Atma or pure consciousness of the creature are one and the same, and not two independent units, that this Atma is the pure self, etc. Anything contrary to this is false and fallacious.

It is believed that all major Upanishads belonging to the Yajur Veda tradition are either directly or indirectly expounded and enunciated by and elucidated upon by Yagyavalkya or any one of his long line of disciples who had acquired this eclectic knowledge from him. (Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 2/6/1-3, 4/6/1-3 and 6/5/1-3.)

The high spiritual prowess and reach of Yagyavalkya can be judged from the fact that he could communicate directly with the Supreme Being called Mandal Purush in his visible manifestation as the brilliant and splendorous Sun as described in Mandal Brahmin Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition. The fact that Yagyavalkya had a repeated communion with the Sun God, at least on four occasion is clearly marked out in Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, 1/1/1-2; 2/1/1-2; 3/1/1-2; 4/1/1-2.

Yagyavalkya was a rich householder sage and seer. This is borne out by the fact that (a) on each occasion when he attended great debates he was showered with huge largesse by king Janak in the form of immense quantity of gold and thousands cows (Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 3/1/1-2, 4/1/1-7, 4/3/33, 4/4/23), and (b) when he asks his wife Maitreyi to partition his vase estate before he went on to take Sanyas (Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 2/4/1-2, 4/5/1-2).

*The creation of Yajur Veda's two branches:-* Yagyavalkya was one of the several disciples of sage Vaishampayana. Once the teacher asked his disciples to perform the 'Brahmavadhya' sacrifice (a type of penance) for him. Yagyavalkya was so confident of himself that he offered to do it all by himself for his teacher. The teacher thought that he was haughty and boastful. So, disowning or disinheriting him from his line of disciples, he commanded that Yagyavalkya should return all that he had learnt from his teacher. The sage returned all the Mantras of the Yajur Veda that he had learnt from his teacher by 'vomiting' them out. The rest of the disciples were very cunning; they transformed themselves immediately into partridges, called Tittars, and gobbled up everything. From that developed the Krishna Yajur Veda's Taittiriya branch. It is called 'Krishna' after the teacher, and 'Taittiriya' after the partridges.

Now, not to be demoralised so easily, Yagyavalkya worshipped the Sun God who blessed him with a fresh set of Mantras of the Yajur Veda. Since it came from the 'bright sun', this set of Mantras was called the 'Shukla Yajur Veda'. [The word 'Shukla' means 'bright or light or illuminated'.] The sage revised this into fifteen sub-texts, called the Vajasanis, i.e. those belonging to the horse race. This is because the Sun God had assumed the form of a 'horse' to teach him, and the word 'Vajis' means a horse.

Yagyavalkya had fifteen disciples (e.g. Kanva, Madhyandin etc.) who mastered one each of these fifteen sub-text created by Yagyavalkya. [Vishnu Puran, 3-5; Vayu Puran, 60-1.]

*Family:-* He had two wives—the elder was named Katayani, and the second was called Maitreyi. From the elder wife, he had a son named Katyanana. [Skandpuran, Nagar Khand, 130; Brihad Aranya Upanishad, 4/5/1.] According to 'Yogi Yagyavalkya', a hand book on Yoga, his third wife was Gargi, though she is depicted as a rival interviewer who tested the sage's erudition and scholarship in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad. [Yogi Yagyavalkya, edited by Upendranath, Vasumati — Calcutta, 1-5.]

*Sanyas:-* Though Yagyavalkya was externally a householder sage and seer, he was internally a self-realised and an enlightened man, a sincere ascetic and a renunciate

monk who knew the futility of worldly pursuits. He was not preaching what he did not believe in. So he finally took to the eclectic path of Sanyas as clearly mentioned in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, 4/5/15.

*Works:-* Yagyavalkya wrote great texts on Yoga, metaphysics and law pertaining to daily life, much like Manu's Smiriti Law. (i) Yagyavalkya Sanhita contains religious laws; (ii) Yog Sanhita was composed in the hermitage of sage Upmanyu [Kurma Puran, 25.]; and (iii) Yogi Yagyavalkya on Yoga philosophy.

Yagyavalkya was a great and acclaimed Yogi (an ascetic) as well as a metaphysical philosopher and preacher par excellence who was well-versed in the knowledge of Brahm and the Atma.

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### (3.8) Shatyayani Upanishad:

This Upanishad has forty verses in all which enumerate the salient features of a 'Vishnu Ling Sanayasi'. A Sanyasi is basically a person who has renounced the attractions of this materialistic world because he has realised its futility and falsehood. This realisation comes with wisdom and enlightenment. He then begins to pursue the 'truth', and this puts him on the path of self-realisation which is the awareness of the pure self as the Atma, which in turn is a microcosm of the supreme Brahm. The virtues that such person should inculcate have been enumerated in detail in this Upanishad.

The word 'Sanyasi' covers all such exalted souls who come under the general category of a renunciate ascetic, a friar, a hermit, a mendicant, a recluse or a monk, while the word 'Ling' refers to the external signs or behavior patterns that help to identify such persons. This Upanishad especially deals with that Sanyasi who is a devotee of Lord Vishnu and hence called a 'Vishnu Ling', and who has completely dissociated himself honestly from this deluding material world and pursues the path of spiritual enhancement leading to self realisation and self purification. This ultimately leads him to the realisation of the ultimately Truth about himself and the creation, and helps him to break free from the endless cycle of transmigration.

This Upanishad comprehensively details the way of life of a true Sanyasi (a true renunciate person), the codes of ethical, moral and behavioral conduct, the various sacraments, rites and vows he is expected to observe, his spiritual stature, his virtues, his external signs and internal temperaments, and all other relevant matters pertaining to such a rigorous, spiritual life. Emphasis is laid on the fact that more than the out worldly behaviour it is the internal purity, sincerity and diligence which leads to the upliftment of the soul that really matters. The main thrust is on honest, robust, and effective self realisation as well as self purification in a comprehensive manner. Stress is laid on the metaphysical, spiritual and ethereal aspects of Sanyas than the mere physical following a set of rites and codes.

Finally, the horrible consequences of falling astray from this path are mentioned along with the unprecedented great benefits that can be got by being steadfast, faithful and diligent in this endeavour.

॥ शाट्यायनीयोपनिषद् ॥

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः । बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥१॥

mana eva manuṣyāṇāṃ kāraṇaṃ bandhamokṣayoḥ /  
bandhāya viṣayāsaktaṃ muktyai nirviṣayaṃ smṛtam // 1 //

1. It is the Mana (the subtle mind and emotional heart; the thoughts and emotions) of a man that is the cause of all his shackles which tie him down to this entrapping and deluding material world, and it is the same Mana that gives him freedom and deliverance from them. The Mana that has a tendency to get attracted towards and attached to the myriad attractions, the numerous comforts and pleasures of the sense organs that are derived from the objects of this material world is the cause of all spiritual bondages for a man. On the other hand, a Mana turned away from them leads to liberation from those bondages (1).

समासक्तं सदा चित्तं जन्तोर्विषयगोचरे । यद्येवं ब्रह्मणि स्यात्तत्को न मुच्यते बन्धनात् ॥२॥

samāsaktaṃ sadā cittaṃ jantorviṣayagocare /  
yadyevaṃ brahmaṇi syāttatko na mucyeta bandhanāt // 2 //

2. Like the way this Mana is hitched or hooked to the sensual pleasures as well as the myriad comforts and attractions offered by the illusively charming objects of this material world, if it diverts the same enthusiasm and infatuation, the same vigour and diligence, the same attachments and indulgences to the supreme universal Truth, the Brahm, then say which shackle or bond of this world is strong and powerful enough from which a man cannot force himself free? (2).

चित्तमेव हि संसारस्तत्प्रयत्नेन शोधयेत् । यच्चित्तस्तन्मयो भाति गुह्यमेतत्सनातनम् ॥३॥

cittameva hi saṃsārastatprayatnena śodhayet /  
yaccittastanmayo bhāti guhyametatsanātanam // 33 //

3. This world has its existence because of the 'Chitta' of a man. That is, when a person allows his mind to think of this world and pay attention to it, his memory to store information about it, and his intellect to accept its presence, it is only then that the consciousness registers something called a 'world'. On the contrary, if the mind

and intellect is diverted elsewhere, one does not see, feel, hear or smell this world; he does not even speak about this world. For all practical purposes, the world has no existence as far as the man is concerned. This is because it is the mind-intellect complex that actually sees, feels, hears, smells anything and coordinates speech. When that window is closed shut, nothing really matters.

Therefore, everyone should diligently endeavour to clean his Chitta of all deluding impulses. A man who succeeds in diverting and focusing his Chitta, in firmly rooting his intellect, thought, attention and priorities on Brahm, is able to achieve that rare state when one starts identifying oneself with the supreme Brahm. [This is because 'one becomes what one thinks'.]

This is an irrefutable, universal and eternal Truth. It is an unequivocal esoteric but truthful fact. [This is because not everyone is aware of the eternal truth and not everyone believes that this world that they see as real is actually a mirage. It is hard to disbelieve one's own eyes, but that is a great paradox—what is seen is false, whereas what is not seen is true! So it becomes difficult to make the mind and intellect to be convinced that the world is false. This is where faith in the scriptures come into the picture, for they are the researched doctrines of wise, scholarly and enlightened sages and seers who had spent an entire lifetime delving deep in to the mysterious of creation and the root causes of all intractable problems faced by mankind. One should benefit from the experience of others, one should firmly belief what the elder spiritual statesmen had declared in the different scriptures. Hence, one realises the fact that the world is a falsehood, and with this conviction one is convinced that it does not exist.] (3).

[Note—Refer Adhyatma Upanishad, Chapter 15, verse no. 26 in this context.]

नावेदविन्मुते तं बृहन्तं नाब्रह्मवित्परमं प्रैति धाम । विष्णुक्रान्तं वासुदेवं विजानन्विप्रो विप्रत्वं गच्छते तत्त्वदर्शी ॥४॥

nāvedavinmanute taṁ bṛhantaṁ nābrahmavitparamaṁ praiti dhāma /  
viṣṇukrāntaṁ vāsudevaṁ vijānanvipro vipratvaṁ gacchate tattvadarśī // 4 //

4. For heretics and non-believers who do not know or do not understand the essential teachings and philosophy of the Vedas do not accept that there is any thing as 'Brihat' or a measureless, vast and all-inclusive entity known as Brahm. In the absence of such erudition and knowledge, one cannot expect to attain that self-illuminated abode of Brahm. [This is because unless one knows precisely about the destination, one has difficulty going there.]

Only those who are well versed in the fundamental principles enunciated by the eclectic and sublime Vedas, and are wise and erudite enough to understand their import regarding the truth about Lord Vishnu who is also known as the all-knowing and all-pervading, omniscient and omnipresent supreme Lord called Vasudeo. This understanding or sublime realisation leads him to the honourable and exalted stature which is truly worthy of a learned and wise Brahmin (4).

अथ ह यत्परं ब्रह्म सनातनं ये श्रोत्रिया अकामहता अधीयुः । शान्तो दान्त उपरतस्तितिक्षुर्योऽनूचानो ह्यभिजज्ञौ समान त्यक्तपेणो ह्यनृणस्तं विदित्वा मौनी वसेदाश्रमे यत्र कुत्र ॥५॥

atha ha yatparamaṁ brahma sanātanaṁ ye śrotriya akāmahatā adhiyuh /  
śānto dānta uparastitikṣuhuryo'nūcāno hyabhijajñau samānaḥtyakteṣaṇo  
hyanṛnastaṁ viditvā maunī vasedāśrame yatra kutra // 5 //

5. A man who eagerly follows the eclectic teaching of the great Vedas and has firm conviction on the truth of their doctrines and tenets, and who has no worldly aspirations, desires, hopes and expectations, is able to realise and understand the truthful, transcendental, universal, eternal and infinite nature of the supreme Brahm. Such persons become an embodiment or a personification of the truthful Brahm. They automatically acquire such virtuous qualities as being peaceful and serene, as having forbearance, fortitude and tolerance, as being completely contented and fulfilled, as having no attractions for the comforts and pleasures of this material world, and as being truly renunciate, dispassionate, detached, indifferent and disinterested towards this world and its objects. Like those seeking emancipation and salvation, such persons have indeed realised the Supreme Being (5).

अथाश्रमं चरमं संप्रविश्य यथोपपत्तिं पञ्चमात्रां दधानः ॥६॥

athāśramaṁ caramaṁ sampraviśya yathopapattiṁ pañcamātrāṁ  
dadhānaḥ // 6 //

6. Such an enlightened and wise person should disassociate himself from all worldly desires, aspirations and hopes. He should fulfill his obligations towards his ancestors and his teachers<sup>1</sup>. Having thus completed his moral obligations (which amounts to being free from debts), the wise renunciate who has realised and understood what the supreme Truth and the absolute Reality is, becomes calm, peaceful and serene. He becomes quiet and rested. He should then take up residence in some serene and secluded hermitage. As a final step, he should accept the rigorous life and stern vows of Sanyas (which is the 4<sup>th</sup> and the last phase of life of a man marked by total and wholesome renunciation and detachment from this world, and spending time on contemplation and meditation upon the pure self, the Atma, as well as Brahm, the Supreme Being). He should accept the five symbols of Sanyas as a final declaration of his intentions. He should endeavour to move ahead steadily, unwaveringly and sincerely on the path of emancipation and salvation (6).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The obligations and duties towards his ancestors is to establish and enhance the good name and fame of the family, to carry forward the family line by marrying and raising a family, and doing religious sacrifices and observing sacraments for the overall good of their spirits and for their eternal peace. The responsibilities to the teacher involve serving him, learning what is taught by the teacher properly so that the teacher does not get a bad name, spreading his good name and fame, giving credit to him whenever possible, paying his dues to him which include respect and honour, and to arrange for his care when he becomes old and infirm.]

त्रिदण्डमुपवीतं च वासः कौपीनवेष्टनम् । शिष्यं पवित्रमित्येतद्विभूयाद्यावदायुषम् ॥७॥



tridaṇḍamupavītaṃ ca vāsaḥ kaupīnaveṣṭanam /  
śikyaṃ pavitramityetad-bibhryādyāvadāyusaṃ // 7 //

7. Henceforth (i.e. after taking Sanyas), as long as he lives, he should always carry a ‘Tri-Dand’ (an ascetic’s staff or sceptre made of bamboo with a short handle made up of two other types of wood measuring roughly four fingers width in length; these three pieces of wood stand for three glorious qualities expected of a Sanyasi such as exemplary self restraint and full control of the mind and thought, of speech and word, of body and deeds). [This Tridanda is a symbol that distinguishes a Sanyasi from the rest of the society. It symbolises that he has chosen the path of liberation and deliverance, that he has moral and spiritual authority, and that he has learnt to practice self-discipline and self-restraint.]

He is ordained to also wear the sacred thread, carry the body wrapping one-piece cloth (to cover his body), use the loin cloth to cover his private parts, carry a latticed sling bag to hold emergency necessities of life, and the Pavitri (which is made of Kush grass and is worn as a ring on the finger during purification rites and religious activities; it is dark green in colour, and its Latin name is *Agrostis Linearis*) (7).

[Note—It is to be noted here that these symbols are accepted in the initial stages of Sanyas. As has been pointed out in Yagyavalkya Upanishad, verse no. 7-9 (which is the 17<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition and Chapter 3.7 of this Book), when he has risen to a certain level of spiritual maturity and become entitled to be called a Paramhans, at that stage he is expected to discard all external symbols of Sanyas.

The word ‘Tridanda’ consists of two parts—‘Tri’ and ‘Danda’. The word ‘tri’ means three, and the word ‘danda’ means a literally a stick, but by extension it implies self-control over the senses, because the stick is a metaphor that is employed to indicate keeping of discipline and maintaining order. For instance, a school master holds a stick to restrain naughty school children and inculcate a sense of discipline in them. A policeman holds a baton to control the crowd. A king holds his sceptre to imply his authority and powers.

So therefore, the Tridanda is a symbol of the Sanyasi’s moral and spiritual authority and powers, of his superior standing in the society, of the fact that he has learnt to practice exemplary self-control. It also means that he has authority over all the three levels of existence—the past, the present and the future; he has controlled Maya or delusions which also has three aspects (known as the Trigunmayi Maya), and that he has overcome the effects of the three Gunas—viz. Sata, Raja and Tama Gunas.

The word ‘Danda’ also means punishment. Hence the Tridanda of a Sanyasi also implies that he practices penances and austerities, and is ready to punish himself for any transgressions that his sense organs may dare to make.]

पञ्चैतास्तु यतेर्मात्रास्ता मात्रा ब्रह्मणे श्रुताः । न त्यजेद्यावदुत्क्रान्तिरन्तेऽपि निखनेत्सह ॥८॥

pañcāitāstu yatermātrāstā mātṛā brahmaṇe śrutāḥ /  
na tyajedyāvadut-krāntirante’pi nikhanetsaha // 8 //

8. The above mentioned five external signs distinguishing a person as a Sanyasi, should be collectively regarded as symbols of the supreme, transcendental Brahm.

Therefore, the mendicant, the reclusive ascetic should never abandon them,

never forsake them. He should always carry them under all circumstances (for these signs create a symbolic nearness to Brahm for him and constantly remind him that he has risen above this mundane world and has attained a stature that is equivalent to being one similar to Brahm, to being very close with the almighty Lord of this creation.

After the death of a Sanyasi, these five symbols that he had carried with him while alive should be buried in the earth (8).

[Note—There is no opposition or contradiction in what Yagyavalkya Upanishad, verse nos. 7-9 says regarding abandonment of external signs, and what these present verses say about the need to carry them as a routine practice. It all depends upon the type of Sanyasi he is, i.e. the school of philosophy to which he subscribes, as well as to the level of his spiritual attainment or elevation. If suppose he has reached a very high level of Brahm realisation where he is perpetually engrossed in mediating and contemplating upon Brahm and his pure conscious Atma, he would not even be aware whether or not he is carrying the staff, the pot, the tuft of hair, the sacred thread etc. He would not at all be bothered about them; rather these external signs and other prescribed formalities of religious way of Sanyas such as having a purification bath, offering prayers, observing certain sacraments, going out for begging etc.—all would be like a burdensome nuisance for him. He wouldn't like to be bothered with them, and in such a case the prescription of Yagyavalkya Upanishad would apply.

But in the initial stages of Sanyas and in all other cases where true Brahm realisation has not yet fructified, the instructions as prescribed in the present Upanishad applies. Even as all students who go to college do not become acclaimed scientists or philosophers, all Sanyasis do not reach that exalted and superior state of Brahm realisation when these signs of Sanyas are no longer needed and become redundant because they have already served their purpose. For the rest, certain codes of conduct are necessary just in order to guide them, to maintain discipline and a degree of decorum, and also to ensure a certain level of dignity, respect and honour for them in the society, for the people would recognise a man as a Sanyasi only when they see him wearing these signs as insignia, just like a doctor is recognised in a crowded hospital by his white apron, a priest by his priestly robe and other external signs, and a lawyer by his coat and tie in the congested court premises. It is for such people that these edicts are meant. Further on, this Upanishad itself stresses in verse nos. 12-13 that these formalities are not needed later on as one has progressed further in one's spiritual journey.]

विष्णुलिङ्गं द्विधा प्रोक्तं व्यक्तमव्यक्तमेव च । तयोरेकमपि त्यक्त्वा पतत्येव न संशयः ॥९॥

viṣṇuliṅgaṃ dvidhā proktaṃ vyaktamavyaktameva ca /  
tayorekamapi tyaktvā patatyeva na saṁśayaḥ // 9 //

9. A renunciate ascetic who aspires to reach his chosen God Lord Vishnu carries with him signs identifying him as a devotee of the Lord to indicate that he has chosen the path of Sanyas to enable him to attain his Lord. The symbols are both external as well as internal<sup>1</sup>. He should never abandon either of them, for in the case he does so then he is deemed to be fallen from his chosen auspicious path and the exalted stature. There is no doubt about it (90).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The external symbols that a reclusive ascetic carries are mentioned in verse no. 7. The internal symbols or signs are the characteristic temperaments, tendencies and outlooks that distinguish a true renunciate from imposters. These internal mental setups and habits are enumerated in verse no. 11-12 and 19 below. One would

observe that more than the external symbols it is the internal signs indicated by mental temperaments and inclinations that are inherent to a person and which determine his thought processes that are of paramount importance because the latter keeps him steadfast on his chosen path with faltering and falling prey to temptations. External symbols can be lost and retrieved, but if one loses his integrity, all is lost for ever. It is also emphasised that the external signs are nevertheless necessary because they create the required background, ambience and motivation for spiritual pursuits with the fear of shame, denunciation and castigation by the society if one falls from the path. This makes him vigilant and alert to uphold the dignity and decorum of Sanyas and do nothing that would put the institution of Sanyas to shame. But it must be remembered that it is his sincere vows to be honest and truthful with himself and loyal to the signs of Sanyas that actually lead him to success. The 'drive and motivation' are represented by the internal symbol, while the external symbols act like a king's royal 'insignia or emblem' that help to distinguish a Sanyasi as an exalted soul.

It ought to be noted clearly here that Lord Vishnu is regarded as a manifestation of the Supreme Being known as Brahm. Like Brahm who symbolises cosmic Consciousness that is the driving force of this creation and the only factor that not only makes this world 'alive' but also takes care of its sustenance, Lord Vishnu, the second of the three Gods of the Trinity (the other two being Brahma the creator, and Shiva the concluder) is also the sustainer and protector of this creation. And like Brahm who stands for the cosmic Consciousness, Vishnu also has a cosmic form known as the 'Viraat Purush', the invisible but all-pervading and immanent form of the Lord. Vishnu is also called the 'Parmatma', the supreme Atma—i.e. the cosmic form of the pure consciousness that is the true 'self' of all living beings. Hence, Vishnu is the supreme Self.

In other words, when the Sanyasi worships Vishnu, he is not worshipping some ordinary God, but Brahm or the Supreme Being or the supreme Self or the cosmic Consciousness itself in this form. When he seeks to attain Lord Vishnu, he is seeking to attain his supreme Self. And this 'supreme Self' is the ultimate destination of the soul of all the living beings.]

त्रिदण्डं वैष्णवं लिङ्गं वि प्राणां मुक्तिसाधनम् । निर्वाणं सर्वधर्माणामिति वेदानुशासनम् ॥१०॥

tridaṇḍaṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ liṅgaṃ viprāṇāṃ muktisāadhanam /  
nirvāṇaṃ sarva-dharmāṇāṃiti vedānuśāsanam // 10 //

10. The Tri-Danda (ascetic's staff or sceptre as described in verse no.7) is regarded as a special symbol or an emblem of a Sanyasi (because it is like a king's royal scepter that stands for his powers and authority). This symbol/emblem has the potential to provide liberation and deliverance to the soul of the erudite and wise Brahmin. [Here the word Brahmin refers not only to a particular class of people but all those who have risen above the mundane and humdrum activities of life in this deluding world and have stepped on the path of realisation of Truth. A Sanyasi is deemed to be a Brahmin because he has turned away from pursuing this mirage-like materialistic world, and instead has turned his attention towards self realisation and Brahm realisation.]

This Tri-Danda represents the sacrosanct edicts of the Vedas. It is an embodiment of all those virtues which are described by the scriptures as auspicious, righteous, noble and proper. [That is, by holding the staff in his hand, the Sanyasi symbolically declares his intention to uphold all these virtues. As a consequence, he should ensure that all his conducts are above reproach and criticism. He should strive

to be an upholder of the truth and a keeper of good conscious, as it were. He should act as a custodian of these virtues and endeavour to live an exemplary life to illustrate by example what is meant by these virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, probity and propriety. He should 'walk the talk of the scriptures'. He sets an example of sacrifices to be made in order to attain an exalted stature of self realisation and self purification.] (10).

अथ खलु सौम्य कुटीचको बहूदको हंसः परमहंस इत्येते परिव्राजकाश्चतुर्विधा भवन्ति । सर्व एते विष्णुलिङ्गिनः शिखिन उपवीतिनः शुद्धचित्ता आत्मानमात्मना ब्रह्म भावयन्तः शुद्धचिद्रूपोपासनरता जपयमवन्तो नियमवन्तः सुशीलिनः पुण्यश्लोका भवन्ति । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् । कुटीचको बहूदकश्चापि हंसः परमहंस इव वृत्त्या च भिन्नाः । सर्व एते विष्णुलिङ्गं दधाना वृत्त्या व्यक्तं बहिरन्तश्च नित्यम् । ११ ॥

atha khalu saumya kuṭīcako bahūdako haṁsaḥ paramahaṁsa ityete parivrājakāścaturvidhā bhavanti / sarva ete viṣṇuliṅginaḥ śikhina upavītiṇaḥ śuddhacittā ātmānamātmanā brahma bhāvayantaḥ śuddhacidrūpopāsanarataḥ japayamavanto niyamavantaḥ suśīliṇaḥ puṇyaślokā bhavanti / tadetadṛcā-bhyuktam / kuṭīcako bahūdakaścāpi haṁsaḥ paramahaṁsa iva vṛtṭyā ca bhinnāḥ / sarva ete viṣṇuliṅgaṁ dadhānā vṛtṭyā vyaktaṁ bahirantaśca nityam // 11//

11. Parivrajaks or Sanyasis are classified into four types--(1) Kutichak, (2) Bahudak, (3) Hans, and (4) Param Hans. All of them wear a sacred thread, a knot of hair on their tonsured head, and other such signs that a renunciate ascetic/friar/monk/hermit/mendicant who is a devotee of Lord Vishnu is ordained to carry by the scriptures (see verse no.7-9). Their Chitta (the faculty of reasoning and thinking, understanding and remembering, paying attention and concentrating and other such faculties of the mind-intellect complex) is pure of any taints, is free from any corruptions and deluding influences. They worship the supreme, sublime and transcendental Brahm in their Atma or soul; they regard their Atma as a microcosmic image or revelation of Brahm as well as a seat of that Brahm. They adhere to the principle of doing Japa (constant repetition of the divine name of the Lord or holy words associated with him and having ethereal and mystical powers) in a prescribed manner. They diligently follow the rules and regulations pertaining to 'Yam and Niyam' (observing self restraint and control of the sense organs from their natural restlessness and tendency to be lured by the sensual objects of gratification in this world; the cessation of worldly pursuits; following rigorously the tenets and doctrines related to a disciplined way of spiritual life). They have a pleasing temperament and righteous demeanours. They are amicable, affable, civilized and charming in all their interactions with others.

In this connection there is this maxim—'The four types of Sanyasis—viz. Kutichak, Bahudak, Hans and Param-Hans—are segregated into these four classes merely because they have certain inherent and subtle Vrittis (temperaments and tendencies) that are very characteristic of them. Besides these, they are otherwise alike in all aspects. All bear the same external as well as the internal signs of a Sanyasi'. [Sanyaso-panishad of the Sam Veda tradition gives a detailed account of the special characteristics referred to here which distinguish them from one another. It is chapter no. 2.4 of this book.] (11).

पञ्चयज्ञा वेदशिः प्रविष्टाः क्रियावन्तोऽमि संगता ब्रह्मविद्याम् । त्यक्त्वा वृक्षं वृक्षमूलं श्रितासः  
संन्यस्तपुष्पा रसमेवाशुवानाः । विष्णुक्रीडा विष्णुरतयो विमुक्ता विष्ण्वात्मका विष्णुमेवापियन्ति ॥१२॥

pañcayajñā vedaśiraḥ praviṣṭāḥ kriyāvanto'mī saṅgatā brahmavidyām /  
tyaktvā vṛkṣaṁ vṛkṣamūlaṁ śritāsaḥ saṁnyastapuṣpā rasamevāśnuvānāḥ /  
viṣṇukrīḍā viṣṇuratayo vimuktā viṣṇvātmakā viṣṇumevāpiyanti // 12 //

12. They are diligent and steadfast, honest and sincere in doing the so-called 'Panch-Yagya' or the symbolic five sacred sacrifices. They are deemed to be experts in them, well versed in them, firmly committed to them<sup>1</sup>. All Sanyasis strictly follow the norms of behaviour and codes of righteous conduct laid down for them by the scriptures. They endeavour to accept the company of Brahm by pursuing all relevant paths pertaining to the truthful knowledge about Brahm, and that can take them to their destination. That is, instead of spending, or rather wasting their precious time in pursuing knowledge pertaining to the material world of illusionary but attractive looking objects which would lead them to nowhere, they endeavour to acquire the sublime knowledge about Brahm and take refuge and shelter in that knowledge.

They abandon this tempting and charming world which is like a colourful tree (having so many branches with myriad varieties of multi coloured flowers, fruits and leaves), and instead of it they focus their attention on its root or the fundamental basis, and marvel at the stupendous creative powers of Nature which is beyond description. [That is, they appreciate the majesty and stupendity of the almighty Brahm that he not only created that tree but empowered it with the powers to recreate its self and other variants as a constant process of evolution.]

In other words, instead of being laid astray and frittering away precious time in trying to understand and unravel the mysterious of the ultimate Truth of this world by attempting to seek it in the labyrinthine web of this world as well as in voluminous scriptures, they straight away go to the cause of it all---the 'root' of the so-called tree which is a metaphor for this world. If they understand the fundamentals, the rest become easy to grasp and follow. This fundamental aspect of the world is 'Brahm'. It is this Brahm that all the scriptures talk about.

This erudition and wisdom makes them realise the futility of elaborate rituals, religious practices and formality of observing sacraments. With enlightenment, they do not feel the need of doing these formalities and instead concentrate upon enjoying the divine taste of the 'nectar of truth and reality'. [That is, they act like bees that home in on the flower's nectar and remain oblivious to the surrounding beauty and enticing fragrances of other flowers in the garden. In fact they remain unbothered about the flower itself except the nectar that it offers to it.]

Such erudite, wise, enlightened and self realised Sanyasi forsakes external deeds (i.e. they need not even do things that are righteous and auspicious and expected to be done as a matter of religious duty; they need not bother about worldly formalities of doing sanctified deeds or observing sacraments). They do not interact with the external world like ordinary mortals do. Instead, their interaction is with the supreme Lord Vishnu; they literally work and play with their Lord instead of working and playing with their worldly companions. They remain engrossed in the thoughts of Lord Vishnu instead of the thoughts of the world. They identify their Atma or soul and their true being with Lord Vishnu and treat it as an embodiment of Vishnu. Their

heart is an abode of Vishnu; they worship the Lord, adore him, honour him, revere him, and only him and no one else<sup>2</sup>.

This commitment and singularity of purpose paves the way for their 'Mukti' or liberation and deliverance from the fetters that shackle a creature to this entrapping and deluding world of transmigration (i.e. they find emancipation and salvation for their soul and do not take birth again in this world) (12).

[Note--(1) <sup>1</sup>The five deemed sacred sacrifices are--(a) doing *Japa* which is repeating/chanting/reciting of the divine Mantra called the Gayatri Mantra which is especially prescribed for renunciate ascetics (see verse no. 14 below), (b) doing *Yoga* or meditation and contemplation upon divinity, (c) doing *Tapa* or observing austerities, doing penances, suffering hardships for spiritual enhancement, having noble thoughts and following virtuous path inspite of all the hurdles and inconveniences, (d) doing *Swadhyaya* or self study which entails the deep study of the scriptures and contemplating upon their teachings as well as meditating upon the Atma which is pure consciousness and the pure self, and (e) endeavouring to acquire *Gyan* which is the truthful knowledge about the ultimate Truth and Reality in the creation, a knowledge that would help to dispel the dark veil of ignorance and delusions that surrounds the creature from all the sides, almost suffocating and pinning him down.

(2) <sup>2</sup>This Upanishad treats Lord Vishnu as the patron deity of Sanyasis. The supreme Brahm and Lord Vishnu are synonymously treated. In other Upanishads dealing with Sanyas, the divine ethereal word OM is used for worship instead of the names of Vishnu. Basically there is no difference between them because the ultimate almighty Authority in the creation is known as 'Brahm' and the latter is also an imaginary name for that Authority which in essence has no names, designations, attributes and forms. Vishnu and OM are two of the numerous names of the Supreme Being. The name of Vishnu here only indicates that this particular Upanishad is meant for the followers of Lord Vishnu who wish to take to Sanyas. Such adherents are called 'Vaishnavs'. Refer also to Yagyavalkya Upanishad of this book.]

त्रिसंध्यं शक्तिः स्नानं तर्पणं मार्जनं तथा । उपस्थानं पञ्चयज्ञान्कुर्यादामरणान्तिकम् ॥१३॥

trisanthyaṃ śaktiḥ snānaṃ tarpaṇaṃ mārjanaṃ tathā /  
upasthānaṃ pañcayajñānkuryādāmarāṇāntikam // 13 //

13. Until the time of death, a Sanyasi should observe certain sacraments especially prescribed for this ascetic's way of life. He should do 'Sandhya'<sup>1</sup>, i.e. he should offer prayers to the supreme Lord three times a day—at dawn, at noon and at dusk. He should bathe daily, offer libation to his dead ancestors and oblation to the Gods. He should keep himself clean by doing the purification rites daily. Worship should be offered to the chosen deity (in this case, Lord Vishnu) while standing in reverence and respect for him. And finally, he should complete the so-called 5-Yagyas or sacred religious obligations towards the Gods, the dead ancestors, the guests of honour, all the creatures at large, and the supreme Brahm (13).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>The *Sandhya* prayers offered three times a day are offered to the Sun God and the hymns used for the purpose is the Gayatri Mantra. See Jabalo-panishad, section 2, verse no.2, and Trishiki Brahmano-panishad, verse no. 109 in this context. This verse should be compared with verse no. 12 in which the Sanyasi is ordained to forsake all worldly deeds as well as formal rites and rituals. There is no contradiction in these verses. This present verse no. 13 outlines the bare fundamental codes of daily conduct of a routine life that a Sanyasi should adhere to—such as offering prayers,

taking a bath, making oblations or offering libations. These are not the activities relating to the gross material world, for doing no deeds and observing no rituals does not mean a blanket sanction to remain idle and become lazy enough to not even offer worship to the supreme Lord, the Brahm; it does not mean also to remain dirty and not taking a bath in the name of 'not doing any worldly deed'. That interpretation is highly ridiculous. After all a Sanyasi is supposed to set an example of righteous and auspicious conduct to be emulated by others in the society who look up to him for guidance and treat him with utmost respect and honour. His not worshipping, not taking a bath, not observing sacraments, not doing the symbolic Yagyas described above, and not following proper rules of conduct would set a bad example and demean the high stature of the institution of Sanyas. The intention of verse no. 12 is to emphasis the fact that a true Sanyasi is not bound by any rigid set of sacrosanct laws and regulations, for they are intended to guide those who are not too well versed in what is to be done and what not to be done; they are not meant for those who are already enlightened and beyond reproach. They need not follow a set pattern of ritualistic way of life if they so wish, but it is expected of them that they do follow certain basic guidelines which only go to help them in their spiritual quest instead of acting as compulsory and inviolable laws which must be rigidly adhered to under any condition. A Sanyasi is expected to follow them voluntarily and freely.]

दशभिः प्रणवैः सप्तव्याहृतिभिश्चतुष्पदा । गायत्रीजप यज्ञश्च त्रिसंध्यं शिरसा सह ॥१४॥

daśabhiḥ praṇavaiḥ sapṭavyāhṛtibhiścatuṣpadā /  
gāyatrijapa yajñāśca trisandhyaṃ śirasā saha // 14 //

14. The Gyatri Mantra having four stanzas or steps<sup>1</sup> (called a Anushtup Chand) should be invoked and recited while doing the sacramental fire sacrifice three times a day—at dawn, at noon and at dusk. The divine, ethereal and eclectic word for Brahm or Pranav, which is OM, is invoked ten times<sup>2</sup> so as to punctuate each word of the Mantra while reciting it, along with the seven 'Vyahritis'<sup>3</sup>. The (Gayatri) Mantra has four 'steps' and a 'head'<sup>4</sup>, and it should be ensured that the entire 'body' is invoked for the prayer. [That is, the full Mantra should be recited from the beginning till the end without any disruption.] (14).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>The holy and famous *Gayatri Mantra* is a hymn in honour of Brahm composed in the typical style of a 'Anushtup Chanda'. That Mantra is the following:--'OM BHURBHUVAHA SVAHA<sup>1</sup>, TATSAVIURVARENYAM<sup>2</sup>, BHARGO DEVASYA DHIMAHİ<sup>3</sup>, DHIYO YO NAH PRACODAYAT<sup>4</sup>'. It means 'OM is the supreme, transcendental Brahm. He is the lord of creation of the terrestrial, the celestial and heavenly worlds. That Brahm is luminous like the Sun. He is excellent, the best, the most exalted, a destroyer of sins, and a divine entity. May he imbibe, infuse and inspire our intellect with wisdom and enlightenment so that we are purified and move on the righteous and noble path'. The four phrases of the Anushtup Chanda are clearly marked by small numerals in this Mantra. This Mantra appears in the Rig Veda (3/62/10), the Sam Veda (1462), and Yajur Veda (3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/6).

<sup>2</sup> Another meaning of saying that OM should be repeated ten times is that the whole Mantra should be repeated ten times during one prayer sitting because OM is at the beginning and it has already stated that there should be no break in recitation. .

<sup>3</sup> The seven *Vyahritis* are the words—(1) Bhu, (2) Bhuvaha, (3) Swaha, (4) Maha, (5) Janaha, (6) Tapaha, and (7) Satyam. 'Vyahriti' means the root word uttered

by the creator at the time of creation which formed the nucleus around which the seven worlds formed. 'Bhu' was the nucleus for earth, 'Bhuvaha' for the sky above the earth, 'Swaha' for the space beyond the earth's atmosphere and is generally meant for the heavens, 'Maha' stands for the greater heavens beyond the solar system, called the Maha-Loka where enlightened sages and seers are supposed to dwell (as opposed to earth where ordinary creatures including subterranean creatures would finally take up residence), 'Tapaha' was the place where exalted ascetics would do penances and austerities, and 'Satyam' was the truthful and ultimate abode where the ultimate and irrefutable supreme truthful entity which is the only Authority in creation resides.

The seven Vyahritis are also called the seven *Subtle Worlds*--- According to Sankhya Shastra and the Purans, Brahma, who is known as 'Swayambhu' (self created in the sense that he had no father or ancestor) created seven elements called 'Vyahriti', viz. Bhuh, Buhvaha, Swaha, Mahaha, Janaha, Tapaha and Satyam respectively which constitute the fundamental elements which formed the gross body of the creation as its core building blocks at the macro level. Encircling this core is the rounded globe called 'earth' which is surrounded by concentric circles constituting of 'water', 'energy' called 'Teja', 'wind or air', 'sky or space', the notions that are described as 'pride, ego, arrogance, haughtiness and vanity' collectively called 'Ahankar', and the notions of 'importance, majesty, grandeur, magnificence and lordliness' called collectively as 'Mahattatva'. Each of them was ten times larger than its preceding layer or circle.

<sup>4</sup> The Gayatri Mantra of *four steps* is based on a particular style of poetic composition called the 'Anushtup Chand'. The *head* of this Mantra is the divine word OM with which it starts, while the rest of the Mantra constitutes the body. The reference to the head, the leg and a body implies that the Mantra is a living personification of divinity; it embodies Brahm because of the use of the word OM as well as the deity who is being praised and honoured. Its invocation and worship is equivalent to invoking the stupendous powers of Brahm himself, and its worship is paying homage to the Supreme Being directly.]

योगयज्ञः सदैकाग्र्यभक्त्या सेवा हरेर्गुरोः । अहिंसा तु तपोयज्ञो वाङ्मनःकायकर्मभिः ॥१५॥

yogayajñāḥ sadaikāgrabhaktyā sevā harerguroḥ /  
ahiṃsā tu tapoyajñō vānmanahkāyakarmabhiḥ // 15 //

15. One should be diligent and steadfast in, focused on, and devoted to doing Yoga (meditation and contemplation)<sup>1</sup> as well as performance of Yagya (religious sacrifices such as fire sacrifice)<sup>2</sup>, and simultaneously serving one's Guru (teacher and moral preceptor; one who removes darkness of ignorance) and the Lord known as Hari (one of the names of Vishnu).

One should be unwavering in following the prime tenet of 'non-violence' or 'Ahinsa'<sup>3</sup> by his Mana (mind and heart; thought and emotions), by his speech and words, by his body, by his actions and deeds. Stern allegiance to the principles of non-violence is equivalent to doing a great Tapa (because it involves a lot of sufferance, fortitude, boldness, strength of character and courage; it needs a lot of forgiveness, forbearance, tolerance, personal sacrifices, compassion, equanimity, mercy and resilience to be able to successfully implement it). This virtue has been honoured as being equivalent to the sacred sacrifice called 'Yagya' (because all religious sacrifices require the chief patron to observe a set of stern vows during the period of the



sacrifice, with the difference here being that this vow of non-violence has no time frame and it is a life long commitment, making its successful implementation all the more difficult) (15).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The word *Yoga* has a broad ramification. Besides its conventional meaning of contemplation and meditation, it also implies the various paths of spiritual enhancement of the aspirant. There are two broad views on the subject. According to one, Yoga involves four spiritual paths--(1) 'Bhakti' meaning devotion and faith on a chosen deity who represents the ideals of the follower; (2) 'Gyan' which is the use of the mind and intellect to reach the ultimate, irrefutable truth; (3) 'Karma' which implies doing righteous deeds and taking appropriate actions as a means of spiritual progress; and (4) 'Raj' which is the psycho spiritual practice of exercises and breath control. According to Patanjali who is considered to be the greatest exponent of Yoga, the latter consists of 8-fold path. These are briefly the following--(1) 'Yam' or self restraint; (2) 'Niyam' or observance of certain sacrosanct rules; (3) 'Aasan' or postures for meditation; (4) 'Pranyam' or breath control exercises for purification of the body and mind; (5) 'Pratyahar' or withdrawal of the mind and its control; (6) 'Dhaarna' or having a firm conviction, faith and belief on the sanctity and truthfulness of the chosen path; (7) 'Dhyan' or contemplation and concentration of the faculties of the mind and intellect; and (8) 'Samadhi' or a state in which the aspirant loses all awareness of the external world and even himself, and remains perpetually in meditation.

<sup>2</sup> The word *Yagya* broadly refers to a fire sacrifice; but again it has a wide meaning. It incorporates in its ambit all activities that are done with a selfless motive with a religious zeal for the betterment of the self as well as of the society at large. With this broad meaning, even selfless teaching is a symbolic Yagya if the intention is not ulterior and it is done to remove the bane of ignorance and make others empowered with knowledge that would set them free. Therefore, 'non-violence' is also an auspicious Yagya as postulated in this verse because it involves the welfare of others and a lot of personal sacrifice and effort.

<sup>3</sup> This verse has a clear resonance in the principal teachings of other major religions, such as Buddhism, Jainism and Christianity as all of them lay the greatest of emphasis on this virtue of non-violence. It not only means not killing anyone but also includes not harming or causing any injury in any manner whatsoever. This implies not to harm anyone by saying anything that hurts his emotions and reputation directly or indirectly; not doing anything or taking any action that causes any pain or misery to others; to plan, think, listen to and even talk about anything that might inspire or cause to be inspired any kind of agony to another creature. This is truthful non-violence. It will be appreciated how tough it is to observe any single vow for a lifetime, and this particular vow entails a lot of personal sacrifices and sufferings.]

नानोपनिषद्भ्यासः स्वाध्यायो यज्ञ ईरितः । ओमित्यात्मानमव्यग्रो ब्रह्मण्यग्नौ जुहोति यत् ॥१६॥

nānopaniṣadabhyāsaḥ svādhyāyo yajña īritaḥ /

omityātmānamavyagro brahmaṇyagnau juhōti yat // 16 //

16. Diligent, regular and thorough study of and deep pondering over the subtle and sublime meanings and implications of the teachings of all the Upanishads is called 'Swadhyaya Yagya'. It involves a continuous and regular self study of the scriptures with the same fervour and devotion that is shown to a fire sacrifice, with due attention for details and their correct meaning. That is, the study of scriptures is no less important than doing a fire sacrifice; it is rather equivalent to it. The divine, holy and ethereal word OM is to be recited or pronounced while one symbolically offers one's

Pran (the pure 'self' represented by the vital spark of life in a creature) as an oblation/offering to the sacred fire representing the supreme transcendental Brahm.

This symbolically implies total surrender to Brahm and sincerity in offering one's self to (the service of) the almighty Authority which is the only and the ultimate Truth and Reality in this creation as well as the only Lord in this world. One should endeavour to make one's Atma (or soul, the pure self and pure consciousness) inseparable and indistinguishable from one's Lord, the supreme Brahm (and consequentially feel elated and exhilarated that such a humble being as the self has acquired the privilege of being so close to that Supreme Being and being identified with him, having the same glory and authority as the Supreme Being. This implies that the aspirant rises above the mundane and becomes as compassionate and magnanimous as the Lord!) (16).

ज्ञानयज्ञः स विज्ञेयः सर्वयज्ञोत्तमोत्तमः । ज्ञानदण्डा ज्ञानशिखा ज्ञानयज्ञोपवीतिनः । १७ ॥

jñānayajñāḥ sa vijñeyāḥ sarvayajñottamottamaḥ / jñānadaṇḍā jñānaśikhā  
jñānayajñopavītināḥ // 17 //

17. 'Gyan Yagya', or diligent, focused and steady pursuance of truthful knowledge of the absolute and irrefutable Truth and Reality, is akin to a sacred religious sacrifice. In fact, it is the best form of sacrifice (because the main objective of any fire sacrifice is spiritual welfare of the self and the society at large, and acquisition of truthful knowledge not only removes ignorance, a major cause of delusions that trap the soul of the creature in the endless cycle of worldly desires and their attendant sorrows, sufferings and miseries, but also empowers him with the insight which he can use to show the correct path to others who are less fortunate; knowledge is empowerment).

The Gyan or truthful and incisive knowledge about the reality that is possessed by an honest and sincere Sanyasi (a renunciate; an ascetic; a friar; a mendicant, a reclusive monk) is represented symbolically by his 'Danda', i.e. it is his scepter or his staff; it is his 'Shikha', i.e. it is his mandatory knot of hair on his tonsured head; and it is his 'Yagyo-pavit', i.e. it is his sacred thread<sup>1</sup> (170).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>That is, Gyan or the truthful knowledge of the reality that can dispel all types of delusions and ignorance has the same importance and significance for a Sanyasi as his three sacred symbols---the staff, the hair and the sacred thread. Even as these external symbols mark a Sanyasi and distinguishes him from the rest in the society, entitling him to instant recognition, reverence, respect, honour and praise, acquisition of knowledge too bestows him a distinguished place amongst his peers. Truthful knowledge will always stand him in good stead and protect him from going astray from his chosen spiritual path much like these three visible signs which are also basically intended to guard him and constantly remind him of his exalted stature so that he is always alert and vigilant. Knowledge always helps him to decide for himself what he should do and what he should avoid.

The three external signs are worldly and gross in comparison to knowledge which is eternal and liberating for the soul. This verse emphasises that since the aim of taking to the difficult path of Sanyas is liberation and deliverance of the soul, it is of prime importance that one pays attention to acquisition of Gyan. As is obvious, external signs will perish with time, but knowledge is imperishable. Besides this, Sanyasi's knowledge will benefit others; it will also inculcate humility in him and lend a spiritual aura about him that would act like the light of the Sun or the Moon for

the others. Instead, if he has no Gyan, mere carrying a staff, sporting the tuft of hair and wearing the thread would more likely make him proud and haughty of the fact that he is a superior person who gets respect as a matter of right, something abhorable for a renunciate person.]

शिखा ज्ञानमयी यस्य उपवीतं च तन्मयम् । ब्राह्मण्यं सकलं तस्य इति वेदानुशासनम् ॥१८॥

śikhā jñānamayī yasya upavītaṃ ca tanmayam /  
brāhmaṇyaṃ sakalaṃ tasya iti vedānuśāsanam // 18 //

18. A person who becomes so wise, erudite and enlightened so as to treat the knot of hair on his head, called a Shikha, as well as the sacred thread, called the Yagyopavit, worn by him as symbols of the supreme, transcendental Brahman, all things used by him or belonging to him become holy symbols of Brahman. This is the proclamation and assertion of the canons of the Vedas; this is their considered view, their discipline, their command, their advice, and their direction and instruction. This is the spiritual discipline they teach (18).

अथ खलु सोम्यैते परिव्राजका यथा प्रादुर्भवन्ति तथा भवन्ति । कामक्रोधलोभमोहदम्भदर्पासूयाममत्वाहंकारादींस्तितीर्य मानावमानौ निन्दास्तुती च वर्जयित्वा वृक्ष इव तिष्ठसेत् । छिद्यमानो न ब्रूयात् । तदेवं विद्वांस इहैवामृता भवन्ति । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् । बन्धुपुत्रमनुमोदयित्वानवेक्ष्यमाणो द्वन्द्वसहः प्रशान्तः । प्राचीमुदीचीं वा निर्वर्तयंश्चरेत् ॥१९॥

atha khalu somyaite parivrājakā yathā prādurbhavanti tathā bhavanti /  
kāmakrodhalobhamohadambhādarpaśūyāmamatvāhaṃkāradīṃstīrīya  
mānāvamānau nindāstutī ca varjayitvā vṛkṣa iva tiṣṭhāset / chidyamāno na  
brūyāt / tadevaṃ vidvāṃsa ihaivāmṛtā bhavanti / tadetadṛcābhyuktam /  
bandhuputramanumodayitvānavekṣyamāṇo dvandvasahaḥ prāśāntaḥ /  
prācīmudīcīm vā nirvartayaṃścareta // 19 //

19. Oh dear gentlemen! [I have described to you what steps a person should take to get himself formally initiated into the order of 'Parivrajaks' (renunciate, ascetic, friars, monks or mendicants). Now I shall enumerate their characteristic glorious virtues and basic temperaments that are inherent in their nature, and the disciplines and regimen they are expected to follow religiously and diligently with firm faith, conviction and sincerity. These Parivrajaks (Sanyasis) have overcome such negative traits as 'Kaam' (broadly meaning worldly passions, lust, desires and longing for sensual gratification), 'Krodh' (anger, wrathfulness, cursing and vehemence), 'Lobh' (greed, avarice, rapacity, longing for material gain), 'Moha' (worldly attractions, infatuations, delusions and ignorance), 'Dambha' (vanity, hypocrisy, deceit, conceit, pretensions and falsehoods), 'Darpa' (false pride, ego, arrogance, superiority complex and haughtiness), 'Asuya' (criticizing and finding faults with others, denouncing them and pricking holes in other people's character and deeds), 'Mamta' (having love and longing for someone or something; to be infatuated, to have undue endearment), 'Ahankar' (ego, pride, arrogance, vanity, haughtiness and hypocrisy) etc.

They remain unmoving, unruffled and unaffected by either being shown respect, honour and praise, or being treated with disdain, insult and contempt. That is,

they have exemplary equanimity, fortitude, forbearance and tolerance as their hallmark. They remain steady, firm and unwavering like a tree in the face of either praise or criticism; they treat praise and rebuke equally, with stoic calm and equanimity.

They do not speak (i.e. do not curse, show no anger, are not vindictive, seek no retribution, punishment or revenge) in spite of being harmed or tormented in any manner by others (exactly the way Jesus Christ remained calm and forgiving when falsely implicated before being crucified).

This is how those who are adroit, wise, erudite and enlightened find the nectar-like elixir of bliss and eternity, called Amrit\*, which leads the soul to liberation and deliverance from the fetters that shackle it to this fearful world while they are still alive in it. [This is called 'Jivan Mukti'<sup>1</sup>, or being free from the bondages of this world while living a normal life, but with a difference that this world has no relevance for such exalted souls; for all practical purposes the world ceases to exist for them.]

In this context, there is a sacred dictum of the Vedas--'After having done one's duty of taking due care of one's brothers, sons etc. (i.e. the family) according to the best of one's ability, one should not look back at them (i.e. one should not worry unnecessarily for them; one should not expect anything from them; one should not expect any reciprocal service and duty bound action from them to take care of their benefactor and mentor). It should be a case of 'do your duty and forget'. In stead, once a person takes to Sanyas (i.e. once he becomes a friar or an ascetic), he should snap all ties with them and go out in the Eastern or Northern direction as a wandering mendicant. He should be constantly on the move, all the while meditating and contemplating upon the pure consciousness 'self' or the Atma. That is, he should stop getting sucked in the vortex of delusions and seek the Truth about the Atma which is pure consciousness, as opposed to wasting his time on pursuing falsehoods.

[The Sanyasi is advised to go far away from his native place so as to ensure that he completely breaks all his ties with it. If he remains nearby, there are good chances of his peace being disturbed, and his renunciation and indifference being undermined by visits of his near and dear ones and their pleadings and narration of woes to him, of his remembering his past life and feeling a sense of re-attachment with the world he has left behind, etc. Being a human being after all, he is bound to be perturbed and feel mentally disturbed; he would be constantly buffeted and tossed emotionally by his past. It is better therefore to put his past life completely behind him and move ahead with his new life as a Sanyasi. So when he goes far away, by and by he would forget everything of his past. His 'umbilical cord' with his past world, which he had so assiduously built and nurtured from scratch, would be snapped for good. He would feel humble like the ordinary man next to him because he would forget that sometime back he was, say, a rich man or someone who occupied a high position in the society. He will feel free like a de-caged bird.

There is another significant point here—the fact that he is advised to go in the East and North direction. Why? It is because the Far East is the land of the rising sun, which is a metaphor for spiritual elevation and enhancement of one's mental and intellectual reach. It is a place of origin of many ancient religions, many schools of eclectic thoughts and philosophies, an ancient land of enlightenment and wisdom, a land of philosophers and mystics. While moving east, the Sanyasi would see the rising sun everyday before him and its movement higher and higher into the sky till it reaches its zenith during noon, as opposed to the west direction where the rising sun would be at his back, and with the passing of each hour the sun would be sinking further and further, all the while losing a bit of its splendour and dazzle till it finally

vanishes in the realm of darkness of the night. The rising sun of the east would remind him of the rising in him of spirituality and divinity on a regular basis. On the contrary, if he had gone west he would be seeing the setting sun daily, symbolising the setting of these eclectic values and their giving way to darkness of the night representing the negative qualities of delusions, ignorance and spiritual decadence.

Similarly, the North direction is a metaphor for upliftment, enhancement and getting up, for rising and moving ahead to reach for something that is higher and better. It is the opposite of falling down and sinking into moral degradation and spiritual demotion, which would be the case if he was advised to move to the South. The south direction is a metaphor for demotion, degradation, degeneration, decadence, and spiritual fall of the aspirant. Besides this, from the perspective of geography also, the land mass of India has vast stretches of the ocean in the south, and it is practically impossible to move far in that direction. Instead, it is more practical and prudent to move to the rejuvenating, serene, tranquil and picturesque environment of the lush green verdant forests, vibrant wild life, blooming flowers, gurgling rivers and enchanting valleys of the lofty mountains in the Himalayan range located in the North to find a place that is conducive to spiritual pursuits, a place that could give peace, succour and solace to the soul of the tormented man in the final days of his life after he has spent his entire lifetime in tiring worldly pursuit.

Hence it is a practical advice given by the Upanishad to move either to the East or the North, instead of to the West and the South.] (19).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>There are basically two types of *Muktis*—(1) Jivan Mukti, and (2) Videh Mukti. The word ‘Amrit’\* appearing in the text refers to the eternal elixir of beatitude and felicity that a creature strives to obtain. A person who has attained Jivan Mukti--which implies that he has obtained liberation from the fetters that shackle a creature to the body and the external world and has found deliverance from its horrible torments (Mukti) even while it is alive and has a body (Jivan)—is deemed to have tasted that elixir (Amrit). He physically lives in this world but remains oblivious of it.

The concept of *Jivan Mukti* and *Videha Mukti* can be briefly described as follows:---The word ‘Jivan Mukta’ means that such persons will become emancipated even though they are still living in this world. They would become enlightened, wise and realised, and Maya or delusion and ignorance would no more have any effect on them. The concept of ‘Jivan Mukta’ has been described by other scriptures in the following way— (a) According to Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 4/4/7, “When all the desires present in one’s heart are eliminated, then such a mortal being becomes immortal and attains Brahman in this body itself why he is still alive”; (b) According to Vivek Chudamani, 543, “A Jivan Mukta person is one who remains ever contented though he has no riches; he is very strong, potent and powerful though helpless and without support; he is perpetually satisfied though he does not enjoy the sense objects of comfort in this world; he treats everyone equally, and is an exemplar in this respect”; (c) According to Vivek Chudamani, 544, “A Jivan Mukta person is he who remains inactive (uninvolved) though doing everything; he remains untouched by the fruits of past actions though witnessing and experiencing them (i.e. he remains unaffected and unruffled); he does not identify himself with his body though he possess one”; (d) According to Laghu (minor) Yog Vashistha, 5/93, “He is called a Jivan Mukta who, though buffeted by such emotions as love, hate, fear and the like, remains unaffected and pure and spotless in his heart as the sky”.

Therefore, ‘Jivan Mukti’ means freedom from being mentally engrossed in this deluding and artificial world and becoming free from the shackles that tie a person to the cycle of transmigration in this world while he still physically lives in it and carries out his assigned and designated duties and works with dispassion and detachment.

The stimuli or impulses originating in the artificial external world that create emotions of likeness or un-likeness, love or hatred, dearness or aversions, are all received by the five sense organs of perception of the gross body (such as eyes, nose, ears, tongue and skin). They are analysed and sorted out in the subtle body by the mind and intellect. The Atma is given the final brief or gist by its assistant in the form of the intellect on these various stimuli, impulses or information received in the form of the various perceptions of the external world as gathered by the sense organs. Bereft of this physical gross body having these sense organs—which act as the radar for the supreme boss which is the Atma sitting in the control room represented by causal body and using the mind-intellect complex of the subtle body as the instrument panel to receive all the information about the external world and ordering the body to act accordingly—there will be no reception of stimuli, and hence the Atma will be free of being deluded by such stimuli, and as a result, it will have no emotions or agitations caused by such stimuli. The Atma, therefore, will remain blissful, peaceful, tranquil and happy in its secluded, serene and sanitised environs. It is like disconnecting the boss from the external world by dismantling the link between his control room and the external world perceived through by the array of the radars present in the form of the sense organs of the body. Once the radar is cut off, all receptions cease, and the control panel goes blank. The Atma will be peaceful and blissful because it will not be agitated by constant bombardment by useless and annoying stimuli and impulses from the external world.

Further, since the Atma, as an independent, individual entity, does not have its own physical body (remember, the creature's body is merely the 'habitat' of the Atma; it is not its 'own' body in the sense that the Atma does not have any ownership right over the body, which is only a temporary residence for it much like a hotel or inn), it naturally follows that it wouldn't have the various organs of perception and action which the physical gross body of the creature has. Therefore, in the absence of the physical body of its own, the Atma will have no chance or scope of being able to be disturbed by the different stimuli from the external world directly. It gets disturbed though indirectly through the sense organs of the gross body of the creature receiving stimuli from the external world. In brief the Atma is an independent resident of the gross body of the creature, and had it not been for the external sense organs of the body, the Atma would have lived perpetually in complete bliss in its causal body where it resides.

Air is present everywhere, but it is neither visible nor felt unless it blows as a soft breeze when it is felt by its touch on the skin. So, in this case, the soul of a person who has become 'Videha Mukta' is compared to this all-pervading but invisible wind or air which is the mainstay of life in the form of breath or 'Pran'. Consequentially, when a person dies, the breath easily moves out of the body without any trouble. Air as breath or Pran is not a dead entity but very much alive and active like the Atma or soul of the creature. Both the Pran and the Atma, as breath and consciousness respectively, are equally important to maintain life inside the body. They are like two sides of the same coin. When a person is freed from his body upon death, his Atma is liberated from the boundaries that are imposed upon it by the body. The Atma sets itself free and merges with the vast cosmos which is present outside the body even as the 'Pran' or breath present inside the body is liberated from it when it is exhaled and merges with the air present outside the body. This is tantamount to attaining complete liberation without any kind of restrictions that are normally imposed by the body on the Atma of the creature.

Since the true identity of the creature is not his body but the Atma, in the case of 'Videha Mukti', this Atma or soul exits from the trapping of the body much like the breath going out from inside the body and finding liberation in the outside air. Since the body has died, it will not breathe, and therefore the breath need not re-enter it again. The air (breath) called 'Pran' has found permanent liberation. Even as the air

does not perish after it leaves the body, the Atma which is the true identity of the creature also does not perish once it leaves the body and is set free.

The word 'Videha' means 'without a body' while the word 'Mukti' means 'liberation and freedom, emancipation and salvation'. So loosely, the phrase 'Videha Mukti' means 'freedom from the encumbrance and limitations of the body'. This 'Videha Mukti', generally speaking, is possible when the individual Atma, which is the truthful identity of the creature, leaves the body to merge with the cosmic Atma present outside the body of the individual creature. The example of the breath leaving the body is the best way to explain the concept. While the breath is inside the body, it represents the Atma of the individual because it is surrounded by the physical, gross body, but as soon as it is exhaled it becomes synonymous with being provided with 'Videha Mukti' because it finds freedom from the encumbrances and limitations of the body and merges with the wind present in the vast space outside the body. So if a wise creature becomes totally unaware of his body so much so that he does not even feel the pain of a pin pricking it, when he is totally oblivious of the fact that the body even exists, then in that state of existence he is equivalent to having actually lost the body altogether—that is, the creature has obtained 'Videha Mukti'. This state is usually achieved during meditation by Yogis when they enter 'Samadhi' which is a trance-like state of consciousness.

In Maho-panishad, canto 2, verse nos. 38-64 of the Sam Veda tradition (an English version has been published separately), king Janak emphasised to sage Sukhdeo that after inculcating all the virtues as enumerated therein, a person not only becomes 'Jivan Mukta', or freed from the burdens cast by this mundane world, but also attains 'Videha Mukti', or is freed from the encumbrances and limitations caused by the body at the same time. These two types of liberation and deliverance go hand in hand; they complement each other. The best example of a person having both these forms of Mukti simultaneously is king Janak himself because although he is a king taking care of the mundane work of the kingdom, internally he is completely detached from the world and is considered the most enlightened and wise king that ever existed. That is why he is also called 'Videha'. The concept has also been explained in detail by Sri Ram to Hanuman in canto 1 of Muktikopanishad which is the 19<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition. Similarly, Adhyatmo-panishad, also of this Vedic tradition and its 15<sup>th</sup> Upanishad, deals with different aspects of Jivan Mukti, especially in its verses 44-47 dedicated to this concept.]

पात्री दण्डी युगमात्रावलोक्य शिखी मुण्डी चोपवीती कुटुम्बी । यात्रामात्रं प्रतिगृह्णन्मनुष्यात् अयाचितं  
याचितं वोत भैक्षं ॥२०॥

pātrī daṇḍī yugamātrāvalokī / śikhī muṇḍī copavīṭī kuṭumbī yātrāmātram  
pratigrhṇanmanuṣyāt / ayācitam yācitam vota bhaikṣam // 20 //

20. Carrying a water pot and holding an ascetic's staff, remaining focused on the two aspects of the pure Truth, viz. the Atma and the Brahm, and endeavouring to establish a union, or Yoga, between the two by developing and cultivating the inner sight of the mind by meditation, contemplation and deep pondering, wearing a tuft of hair or a knot, called the Shikha, on the tonsured head and the sacred thread, called a Yagyopavit, on his body which he regards as his only companion, kith and kin, a renunciate Sanyasi (monk/mendicant/ascetic/friar) should either beg for food by requesting people for it, or accept whatever is given to him by providence without his actually seeking it through begging. The food should just be sufficient enough to sustain his body to help the Pran (life in the form of his Atma, the pure conscious self)

to complete its journey in this mortal world, using the body as a vehicle. He should always be on the move subsisting on food got as described here (20).

मृदावलाबूफलंतनुपर्णपात्रं तत्तथा यथा तु लब्धम् । क्षाणं क्षामं तृणं कन्थाजिने च पर्णमाच्छादनं  
स्यादहतं वा विमुक्तः ॥२१॥

mṛddārvalābūphalaṁtantuparṇapātraṁ tattathā yathā tu labdham / kṣāṇaṁ  
kṣāmaṁ trṇaṁ kanthājine ca parṇamācchādanaṁ syādahataṁ vā  
vimuktaḥ // 21 //

21. He should accept any kind of humble pot that is easily available—whether it be made of mud or clay (e.g. an earthen vessel), of wood or hollowed out pumpkin, or made of willow, wicker or folded leaves. For the purpose of a seat to sit upon or as a covering for the body, he should rely on bark of trees, dry grass, deer skin/hide of an antelope or dried leaves which have already been spoilt by insects. [The bark of tree, grass and leaves are beaten and padded together to form a coarse sitting mat or an over garment. Usually, the dried deer skin/antelope hide is spread on heaped grass and dried leaves upon which the Sanyasi rests. This deer skin is also used to cover the body. If that is not available, a Sanyasi should opt for large leaves to sit upon and cover his private parts. Or else, padded bark of tree or even dried up leaves stuffed in some old cloth bag which is then beaten to form a coarse blanket can be contrived to serve the dual purpose of a seat and a garment.] (21).

ऋतुसन्धौ मुण्डयेन्मुण्डमात्रं नाधो नाक्षं जातु शिखां न वापयेत् । चतुरो मासान्ध्रुवशीलतः स्यात्स  
यावत्सुप्तोऽन्तरात्मा पुरुषो विश्वरूपः ॥२२॥

ṛtusandhau muṇḍayenmuṇḍamātraṁ nādho nākṣaṁ jātu śikhāṁ na vāpayet /  
caturo māsāndhruvaśīlataḥ syātsa yāvatsupto'ntarātmā puruṣo viśva-  
rūpaḥ // 22 //

22. At the time of change of seasons (for example, when summer ends and the rains start, then when the rains stop and fall arrives, then when winter comes, and when winter concludes and spring sets in etc.), the Sanyasi should get his head shaved but ensure that 'Shikha' or the tuft of hair on his head remains intact. During the four seasons when the 'Viraat Purush' or Lord Narayan or Vishnu, who embodies the whole universe in his being as the macrocosmic, all encompassing form of creation, is resting or sleeping<sup>1</sup>, the Sanyasi should spend those months at one place with a peaceful mind and calmness of demeanours. He should allow peace to prevail so that the Lord of the world can rest or sleep undisturbed in his inner self, i.e. in his heart, as his Atma<sup>2</sup> (22).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This 4-month period is called 'Chaturmaas' during which a Sanyasi is supposed to stop his wonderings and stay at some secluded place outside the village. Usually, for itinerant monks, it is the rainy season. It was a practical measure devised by ancient sages because during these four months there is heavy rainfall and its attendant inclement weather. It would be very inconvenient and impractical for an old man to move around unprotected during such bad weather, for he might fall gravely sick with no one to look after him. Further, a break from constant wonderings is



necessary to give the body necessary rest and time to recuperate and rejuvenate. So we see that ancient scriptures were very wise and practical in their prescriptions, though practical aspects were cloaked in the language of religious duties and codes of conduct.

<sup>2</sup>Since the *heart* of the Sanyasi is an abode of the Lord who resides in it as his Atma or soul, since the Sanyasi is an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu as already indicated in verse no. 9 and 10 by the use of the words ‘Vaishnav Ling’ or having the sacred symbols of Lord Vishnu enshrined in his heart and represented by the external marks on his body, and since Vishnu is the Viraat Purush according to the Purans, the Sanyasi should visualise that his patron God be not disturbed while he is resting in his heart. This is how a true devotee always thinks; he treats his subject of affection with great care, almost with kid’s gloves, as it were. So he remains absolutely calm and composed, both externally as well as internally. In practical terms, this is a device envisioned by ancient sages to give the wandering mendicant a period of some physical rest so that he can recuperate and feel rejuvenated. See also verse no. 23.]

अन्यानथाष्टौ पुनरुत्थितेऽस्मिन्स्व कर्मलिप्सुर्विहरेद्वा वसेद्वा । देवाग्न्यगारे तरुमूले गुहायां  
वसेदसङ्गोऽलक्षितशीलवृत्तः । अनिन्धनो ज्योतिरिवोपशान्तो न चोद्विजेदुद्विजेद्यत्र कुत्र ॥२३॥

anyānathāṣṭau punarutthite’sminsva karmalipsurviharedvā vasedvā /  
devāgnyagāre tarumūle guhāyām vasedasaṅgo’lakṣitaśīlavṛttaḥ /  
anindhano jyotirivopaśānto na codvijedudvijedyatra kutra // 23 //

23. Whether he stays at one place or wanders about, a Sanyasi seeking emancipation and salvation should not pursue or get himself involved in any worldly activity other than that prescribed for him (as described in verse no. 12-20 above). For his temporary residence, he should select a secluded place under the shadow of a tree in or near a temple, or in a cave. There, he should stay alone as a lonely recluse without any company, and as far as possible make himself anonymous, inconspicuous and unavailable for others. [That is, he should avoid contact with people and any kind of interaction with them.]

He should be calm and peaceful; he should virtually be like the invisible ‘fire’ that is omnipresent everywhere but normally remains invisible, dormant, latent and imperceptible without its ignition with the help of the firewood<sup>1</sup>. He should never feel annoyed or frayed, agitated or perturbed in any manner at the sight of anyone because he should rise above the mundane and narrow mindedness, and treat everyone alike as being an image of the same Atma or soul that has revealed itself in so many myriad forms<sup>2</sup> (23).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The *fire* element is present everywhere, even in the firewood, but it remains dormant and latent and hidden from view unless ignited when it jumps into view with all its majestic brilliance and splendour. Similarly, a renunciate friar is expected to live an anonymous life but make his presence felt only when deemed necessary, such as for begging for food or when someone seeks his spiritual guidance. This pensive and reclusive life prevents him from getting unnecessarily disturbed and perturbed mentally by the constant buffeting that the mind is subjected to from the various perceptions and stimuli that have their origin in this entrapping, external world. This withdrawal into one’s own self helps the Sanyasi to live a peaceful life free from agitations and restlessness, a life that is conducive to contemplation and meditation which is a matter of top priority for him.

<sup>2</sup>Since a realised and enlightened Sanyasi is expected to treat everyone alike—whether he is a friend or a foe, whether that person had been causing him insult or embarrassment, or had been a cause of his torments and agonies in any way whatsoever, a Sanyasi should remain stoic and calm at his sight. This would be like a fire-test of his sense of equanimity, dispassion and indifference, of his enlightened views that all are alike and Brahm personified. The practical spin-off is that his tormentor or opponent would be ashamed of himself and would, in due course of time, relent and feel guilty. Why? It is because we must not forget that no matter how wicked and evil the man is, how pervert and sinful he might be, but once in a while his inner voice, his conscious pricks him. If the Sanyasi remains calm and forgiving and does not retort, if he shows love and compassion instead, the sinful and wicked man is bound to feel the prick of his own conscious turning hostile against his own self and bite him ferociously like the sting of a scorpion. He is bound to relent and repent. On the contrary, if the Sanyasi retaliates, then not only would he lose his own poise and calm but give the other man a chance to find an excuse to torment him further; he would jack up his affront and tease the Sanyasi more.

After all, there is an old adage which says that it takes two hands to clap—if the Sanyasi shows no interest and complete indifference towards the world, the world would sooner or later leave him to himself.]

आत्मानं चेद्विजानीयादयमस्मीति पूरुषः । किमिच्छन्कस्य कामाय शरीरमनुसंज्वरेत् ॥२४॥

ātmānaṃ cedvijānīyādayamaśmīti pūruṣaḥ /  
kimicchankasya kāmāya śarīramanusamjvaret // 24 //

24. In the instance when a man realises that his Atma or soul is his true identity or true self, and that it is pure consciousness, then say, what is the purpose of his either taking so much care of his body or even neglecting it; what can he ever expect, hope or desire to have or do? That is, with the dawn of enlightenment, this gross and perishable body which is nevertheless separate and distinct from the Sanyasi's true 'self', his Atma, loses all relevance and importance. It is not only relegated to the background, but virtually and literally dumped for good by him. He stops taking any interest in his body (24).

तमेव धीरो विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत ब्राह्मणः । नानुध्यायाद्बहूञ्छब्दान्वाचो विग्लापनं हि तत् ॥२५॥

tameva dhīro vijñāya prajñāṃ kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ /  
nānudhyāyād-bahūñchabdānvāco viglāpanaṃ hi tat // 25 //

25. An erudite and wise Brahmin who is steady and persistent in his spiritual pursuit of seeking that which is the ultimate Truth and absolute Reality, i.e. Brahm who is imperishable, eternal and infinite, should fix his attention unwaveringly on that Truth and Reality once that enlightenment dawns upon him. He should establish his intellect and mind firmly on that ultimate, supreme and transcendental Truth (Brahm).

One should not allow oneself to be trapped in a quagmire of words because they are like a trap and a misuse of the faculty of speech. [That is, a Sanyasi should guard against indulgence in debates, discussions, gossiping and chattering as well as attending lectures or giving them himself or answering queries, because they are all a cause of vexation for the spirit. The supreme Truth is so indefinable,

incomprehensible and irrefutable that it cannot be explained and defined by words; its profundity and endless vastness cannot be canned and encrypted in words, and neither can it be ascertained or deduced by debates and discussions. That is why it is ordained that he observes silence.] (25).

बाल्येनैव हि तिष्ठामेन्निरविद्या ब्रह्मवेदनम् । ब्रह्मविद्यां च बाल्यं च निर्विद्य मुनिरात्मवान् ॥२६॥

bālyenaiva hi tiṣṭhāsenirvidya brahmavedanam /  
brahmavidyām ca bālyam ca nirvidya munirātmavān // 26 //

26. He should be unattached to anything just like a child<sup>1</sup>. A Sanyasi should remain firm in his renunciation, detachment, dispassion and indifference towards the external world. 'There is nothing besides Brahm'—this should be his firm conviction, faith and belief; he should be firmly grouted in this truth. He should realise the truth of Brahm like an enlightened, wise, learned and scholarly adult, while like a child he should remain indifferent and detached from this materialistic world. Consequentially, he should enjoy the company of his Atma or his pure consciousness and see it everywhere. Therefore, he never feels alone, because the Atma is always there to give him company. That is, once he has realised the truth about the ubiquitous and supreme Atma, he should forsake all that is non-Atma, i.e. the deluding and misleading artificial world. Once illusions are dispelled, the Truth prevails; he sees the Atma in the other person as much as he sees it in his own self. In fact, all that he surveys become one Atma because he is able to peer behind the veil of the gross world and see the same universally sublime and immutable Truth as the subtle Atma everywhere. When he reaches this enlightened state when he understands the real meaning of 'non-duality', it can be safely said of him that he has attained liberation and deliverance from the fetters that shackle a creature in this world (26).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>A *child* gets a toy to play; for a little while he remains engrossed and infatuated with it, then he throws it away and forgets it for good. He starts doing something else and never bothers about that toy again. A child is also not bothered about all that is happening around him in this world as long as he is playing with the same toy; he remains lost within himself. A child also makes an easy friend and hardly can be called anybody's enemy. A child is easy to please and befriend. A child has a pure and innocent heart which is untainted or biased by any worldly considerations. A child would treat everything alike; it would not distinguish between a rope and a snake. That is why a friar is compared to a child—pure and uncorrupt, unattached and unbothered, one who remains engrossed within himself and is oblivious of the external world, one who is a friend of all and enemy of none; one who treats all alike.

Jesus Christ has clearly emphasised this fact about the child in the Holy Bible, Gospel of St. Matthew, 18/1-5 when he says, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in their midst; and he said—Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and who receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me'.]

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः । अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥२७॥

yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hr̥di śritāḥ /  
atha martyo'mṛto bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute // 27 //

27. When all the desires, yearnings, hopes and expectations of the heart subside, calm down, or are eliminated and vanquished altogether, then he (the Sanyasi), though being mortal like other ordinary creatures, becomes immortal and tastes the exhilarating elixir of bliss and happiness obtained by contentedness (27).

[Note—No one can hope to fulfill all his dreams and accomplish all his desires in full. Some part of it will certainly remain unfulfilled. For an ordinary man, this is a cause of frustration, dismay, distress and perplexity. He begins to pursue his objective with renewed vigour and might even succeed in actually accomplishing the unfulfilled part of his objective, but all this leaves a trail of consequences, good or bad, for him. For example, his peace of mind is affected, his body groans under the stress; he cannot please all around him and this leaves so many disgruntled people, and so on and so forth. In brief, 'true peace' is never possible unless all worldly aspirations and expectations are done with for good. 'To become immortal' is a metaphor for being liberated from the dark pit of delusions and illusions, because the latter create the fear of failures and getting trapped. A person who has no desires and aspirations will not have the chance to face failures and frustrations. The peace and bliss that is attendant to such detachment is tantamount to being freed from the bondage of fear, frustration, distress, dismay, vexations, uncertainties and perplexities which are symbolic signs of death of the freedom of the Spirit.]

अथ खलु सोम्येदं परिव्राज्यं नैष्ठिकमात्मधर्मं यो विजहाति स वीरहा भवति । स ब्रह्महा भवति । स भ्रूणहा भवति । स महापातकी भवति । य हमां वैष्णवीं निष्ठां परित्यजति । स स्तेनो भवति । गुरुतल्पगो भवति । समित्रध्रुग्भवति । स कृतघ्नो भवति । स सर्वस्मा ल्लोकात्प्रच्युतो भवति । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् । स्तेनः सुरापो गुरुतल्पगामी मित्रध्रुगेते निष्कृतेर्यान्ति शुद्धिम । व्यक्तमव्यक्तं वा विधृतं विष्णुलिङ्गं त्यजन्न शुध्येदखिलैरात्मभासा ॥२८॥

atha khalu somyedam parivrājyaṁ naiṣṭhikamātmadharmam yo vijahāti sa vīrahā bhavati / sa brahmahā bhavati / sa bhrūṇahā bhavati / sa mahāpātakī bhavati / ya imāṁ vaiṣṇavīm niṣṭhām parityajyati / sa steno bhavati / sa gurutalpago bhavati / samitradhrugbhavati / sa kṛtaghno bhavati / sa sarvasmāllokātpacyuto bhavati / tadetadṛcābhyuktam / stenaḥ surāpo gurutalpagāmī mitradhrugete niṣkṛteryānti śuddhim / vyaktamavyaktaṁ vā vidhṛtaṁ viṣṇuṅgam tyajanna śudhyedakhilairātmabhāsā // 28 //

28. Oh dear gentleman! A Sanyasi who falters from his path, who abandons or violates any of the doctrines and sacrosanct codes of conduct meant for such an exalted and hallowed life of a Sanyasi, who falls prey to temptations (which are like baits thrown by the devil), is equivalent to a person who has compromised on his manhood, who has ruined his reputation of manliness and courage as well as of having the virtues of fortitude, strength and virility. Such a man is equivalent to a person who has killed a noble Brahmin or has harmed the cause of Brahm, is like a person who has killed an embryo (i.e. has done an abortion which is equivalent to murder of a helpless and innocent infant), and is like a great and unpardonable sinner.

A Parivrajak (a renunciate Sanyasi, friar, monk, mendicant, ascetic, recluse) who abandons any of the strict vows taken at the time of taking to Sanyas is like a thief, is like an adulterer who has extra-marital affair with the wife of his Guru

(teacher), is like the one who betrays a friend, and is deemed to be most unfaithful, disloyal, ungrateful and treacherous by nature.

He is condemned from all higher and noble worlds, and is relegated to and dumped in the backyards of creation and goes to a most disgraceful lower world. [That is, he is convicted of a serious crime, and like a criminal is condemned to the gallows, as it were.]

In this context, there is this saying:--‘A thief, a drunkard, one who has sexual relationship with the wife of his teacher, and a betrayer of a friend—they can free themselves of these sins by repentance and atoning for them by doing penances, but violating, compromising, abandoning or showing disrespect towards any of the sacrosanct and inviolable principles, signs, vows and tenets pertaining to the order of Sanyas, whether implied or explicit, whether invisible or visible, can never expect to have any forgiveness or leniency shown to him for his errors of commission or omission, for his misdeeds and falling prey to temptations under any pretext whatsoever (28).

त्यक्त्वा विष्णोर्लिङ्गमन्तर्बहिर्वा यः स्वाश्रमं सेवतेऽनाश्रमं वा । प्रत्यापत्तिं भजते वातिमूढो नैषां गतिः  
कल्पकोट्यापि दृष्टा ॥२९॥

tyaktvā viṣṇorliṅgamantarbahirvā yaḥ svāśramam sevate'nāśramam vā /  
pratyāpattiṁ bhajate vātimūḍho naiṣāṁ gatiḥ kalpakotyāpi drṣṭā // 29 //

29. Parivrajak (as defined above) who abandons any of the sacred marks or signs and does not follow the inviolable tenets of the order of Sanyasis (Parivrajaks), whether they are external signs (such as a staff or the sacred thread) and behaviours (such as begging for food and living alone in a secluded place), or internal temperaments and inclinations (such as being disinterested in and unattached to the affairs of the world, especially his family and kin, being of a calm mind and equitable demeanours towards all, being contemplative and meditative, being tolerant and forgiving etc.), is always surrounded by troubles and miseries (i.e. he never finds peace), is continuously tormented and pursued by misfortunes and adversities whether he prefers to stay at one place or roams around in far off places.

Such people cannot hope and cannot expect to have an auspicious end or have any success in their spiritual pursuit even in a long time (29).

त्यक्त्वा सर्वाश्रमान्धीरो वसेन्मोक्षाश्रमे चिरम् । मोक्षाश्रमात्परिभ्रष्टो न गतिस्तस्य विद्यते ॥३०॥

tyaktvā sarvāśramāndhīro vassenmokṣāśrame ciram /  
mokṣāśramātparibhraṣṭo na gatiḥ tasya vidyate // 30 //

30. A righteous person who is steadfast, patient, courageous, resilient and serious in his pursuit of Sanyas should refrain from taking shelter in any ‘Ashram’<sup>1</sup> other than the one that gives him an opportunity to have ‘Moksha’ (meaning liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation of the soul from the fetters that tie down a creature to this deluding and entrapping world). Verily, those who are fortunate enough to find shelter in this hermitage called ‘Moksha-Ashram’, the stage which is the final launching pad for liberation and deliverance from this entrapping world, and

then unfortunately step down from this high altar, will have no solace and succour anywhere else. They would have lost a golden opportunity, as it were (30).

[Note---<sup>1</sup>The word *Ashram* literally refers to a hermitage, a shelter for recluses, a refuge-house or any other place meant to house those who have left their homes and have no where else to go. But here the word is used to denote a way of life governed by a set of rules with a particular aim in mind; a school of thought or philosophy which directs its adherents so that they can lead a better life by following a particular line of thought and philosophy, and regulate their deeds and actions accordingly. In Hinduism, there are four Ashrams--viz. (a) Brahmacharya—this is the 1st phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style, (b) Grihastha — when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the second phase called Grihastha Ashram which is a householder life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life and dealings with this deceptive world with all their accompanying horrifying problems, (c) Vaanprastha —this is the 3rd phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) Sanyas —this is the 4th and last stage of life when there is complete cutting off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation and begging for food, and single mindedly pursuing the goal of emancipation and salvation for the soul.

This verse essentially means that a true seeker of Moksha (spiritual emancipation and salvation) should be focused on his goal of attaining Moksha. All other things become secondary and inconsequential for him. If he finds that a particular way of life is more conducive to his mental peace and would help him in obtaining Moksha, although it might not find express mention or sanction in the scriptures or may also be unconventional and untraditional, but if it suits him nevertheless, he is free to adopt it and pursue it. We will observe the openness in the approach of the Upanishads. After instilling fear of punishment for violating any of the sacrosanct rules, the Upanishads become magnanimous and liberal, leaving the man to decide things for himself as he grows mature. Initial discipline is necessary just like a child needs to learn discipline in the formative years of his life, but when the same child grows up to become a responsible adult he is left to fend for himself and decide his own future. But the root of his way of thinking, his manners, his temperament, his outlook for life and his behavioural norms as an adult have been moulded during his earlier days. His adult life would reflect the discipline that he was subjected to as a child by his parents and teachers. The same logic applies to a Sanyasi. In the initial stages of Sanyas, he is supposed to adhere strictly to certain fixed laid out rules of conduct, but later on this is relaxed and he is supposed to look after himself and select the path best suited to him.

So we see that once a person has reached the last stage which is considered as the doorway to final liberation, and then wavers and falls, then obviously he is most unfortunate! This is what is meant here in this verse. ]

पारिव्राज्यं गृहीत्वा तु यः स्वधर्मे न तिष्ठति । तमारूढच्युतं विद्यादिति वेदानुशासनम् ॥३१॥

pāivrājyaṃ grhītvā tu yaḥ svadharme na tiṣṭhati /

tamārūḍhacyutaṃ vidyāditi vedānuśāsanam // 31 //

31. A person who has just ascended the high altar of the ‘Order of Sanyasis/Parivrajaks’, accepts its vows, and then falters or wavers in upholding the sanctity and holiness of that exalted state, should be regarded as ‘fallen and disgraceful, lowly and condemned, worthy of reproach and sanction’. This is the order of the Vedas; this is their edict and final verdict; this is the discipline outlined by them (31).

अथ खलु सोम्येमं सनातनमात्मधर्मं वैष्णवीं निष्ठां लब्ध्वा यस्तामदूषयन्वर्तते स वशी भवति । स पुण्यश्लोको भवति । स लोकज्ञो भवति । स वेदान्तज्ञो भवति । स ब्रह्मज्ञो भवति । स सर्वज्ञो भवति । स स्वराट् भवति । स परं ब्रह्म भगवन्तमाप्नोति । स पितृन्संबन्धिनो बान्धवान्सुहृदो मित्राणि च भवादुत्तारयति ॥३२॥

atha khalu somyemaṃ sanātanamātmadharmam vaiṣṇavīm niṣṭhām labdhvā yastāmadūṣayanvartate sa vaśī bhavati / sa puṇyaśloko bhavati / sa lokajñō bhavati / sa vedāntajñō bhavati / sa brahmajñō bhavati / sa sarvajñō bhavati / sa svarāṭ bhavati / sa param brahma bhagavantamāpnoti / sa pitṛnsaṃ-bandhino bāndhavānsuhrdo mitrāṇi ca bhavāduttārayati // 32 //

32. Oh dear gentleman! A person who remains steady and unwavering on the chosen path which is truly holy and traditionally sanctioned as the correct path that is the righteous and auspicious way to follow for a renunciate ascetic who is an ardent follower of Lord Vishnu, is regarded as the one who has vanquished all temptations and has also observed the strict laws of self restraint. He attains great fame, glory and majesty as the exemplary upholder of religious tenets. He is known throughout the world, and he knows whatever is worthy to be known in this mortal world. He is deemed to be realised about the supreme Brahm, and about everything else (i.e. he becomes all knowing and omniscient like Brahm himself). He is like an Emperor from whom nothing is hidden and for whom nothing is inaccessible.

Verily, he attains the supreme, transcendental Brahm who is the Lord Emperor of the entire creation. [It is a situation where one great king meets another king; the Sanyasi meeting his Lord, the supreme Brahm, is similar to this situation.]

He becomes so much empowered with divine powers and authority that he is able to provide liberation and deliverance to his ancestors, called Pittars, his kith and kin, his brothers, friends and compatriots (32).

तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् । शतं कुलानां प्रथमं बभूव तथा पराणां त्रिशतं समग्रम् । एते भवन्ति सुकृतस्य लोके येषां कुले संन्यसतीह विद्वान् ॥३३॥

tadetadṛcābhyuktam / śataṃ kulānāṃ prathamam babhūva tathā parāṇāṃ trīśataṃ samagram / ete bhavanti sukr̥tasya loke yeṣāṃ kule saṃnyasatīha vidvān // 33 //

33. There is a sacred hymn in this context which stipulates the following doctrine:--‘A wise person who accepts the vows of the Order of Sanyas (i.e. voluntarily decides to renounce the world and its allurements, and becomes a friar, a monk, an ascetic, a mendicant or a hermit), becomes so honourable and purified that a hundred generations before him and three hundred generations after him find liberation and deliverance. It is once in a long while, it is a rare occurrence rather than the standard norm that such enlightened and self realised, wise and erudite renunciate souls take birth in the world in order to oblige it, to benefit it by their exalted presence, to redeem it, to provide it guidance, to make it feel cared for and fulfilled and emancipated by their august presence and righteous deeds and noble actions’ (33).

[Note—The phrase ‘hundreds of generations’ is only a figure of speech, and not a physical count, to emphasise the greatness of a Sanyasi and the divine nature of his soul. He virtually becomes as holy as the supreme Lord himself. Even in today’s modern world we have numerous examples of great individuals whose lives had completely changed the course of history, and hence have affected generations after generations of peoples.]

त्रिंशत्परांस्त्रिंशदपरांस्त्रिंशच्च परतः परान् । उत्तारयति धर्मिष्ठः परिव्राडिति वै श्रुतिः ॥३४॥

triṁśatparāṁstriṁśadaparāṁstriṁśacca parataḥ parān /  
uttārayati dharmiṣṭhaḥ parivṛāḍiti vai śrutiḥ // 34 //

34. The scriptures aver that a righteous, honest and steadfast Parivrajak (Sanyasi) is so spiritually powerful and potent that he provides emancipation to thirty generations of his future descendents, thirty generations of his past ancestors, and thirty generations of his descendents’ branches (34).

[Note—If one man becomes a truthfully righteous follower of Brahm, or in other words if he is spiritually enlightened, holy and pious, that entire clan along with those who are even distantly related to them are benefited by his holiness and divinity. It is like a bright candle being lit in a dark room; the light benefits all those who are around and illuminates even the far corners of the room. An illustration will prove the point. Suppose there is a very sinful and pervert man in a family and he happens to migrate to a distant place and live for some time in an alien society. His host society will judge the whole community from where he comes by their experience of this single man, and unfortunately in this example he is not a good man. So they begin to revile that whole parent society because they treat this man as a sample representing the whole. A similar thing holds true for a good man. Taking another example, a lighted incense stick or an open bottle of perfume, though located in one certain area of a room, would however fill the entire room with their sweet fragrance. Therefore, a righteous and honourable monk renders glories and honour to his folks, whether they are his former family members or his peers in monk-hood or the society to which he belongs. People hold him in high esteem; they look unto him for selfless guidance and moral support. Verse no. 33 clearly states that such honourable souls are born once in a while. Closer home, the truth of these verses can be observed in the life of great saints and prophets—they are literally store houses of divine energy which forms as aura around them and radiates from them like the rays of the sun or moon to evenly spread everywhere and benefit all. Their presence nourishes the soul of those present near them. They personify the virtues of love, compassion, graciousness, bliss and tranquillity in their best forms. Their words of wisdom guide many generations of peoples. Even after their bodily death, their august presence is felt and people of all



faiths go to their tombs to seek their blessings and pray to them so as to find solace, succour and deliverance from their troubles.]

संन्यस्तमिति यो ब्रूयात्कण्ठस्थप्राणवानपि । तारिताः पितरस्तेन इति वेदानुशासनम् ॥३५॥

saṁnyastamiti yo brūyātkanṭhasthaprāṇavānapi / tāritāḥ pitarastena iti vedānuśāsanam // 35 //

35. Even when a man is in the throes of death and grasping for breath before dying, if he honestly and sincerely says at that moment that ‘I have taken the vows of Sanyas’, or in other words gets filled with deep and true renunciation even at that eleventh hour, it must be assumed that he has indeed become a Sanyasi, and therefore all the benefits that accrue to a truthful Sanyasi would also accrue to him. Consequentially, he also is able to provide deliverance to his ancestors. This is the declaration of the Vedas (35).

[Note---One must be careful to interpret this verse. It does not mean that a man spends his entire lifetime in pursuing this materialistic world like a greedy man and say ‘I am a Sanyasi’ at the last moment and hope to join the legion of exalted souls and holy men! No, it is never possible; it is too far-fetched. This is because it is not easy to even think of Sanyas in its truest form by such a man whose mind is overwhelmed by the thoughts of the world, and who has spent his entire life wallowing in the filth of this deluding world. At the time of death he would be more concerned about his unfinished tasks, about his family, about his obligations, about his material assets, about his bodily agonies etc., and he would be so overcome by the fear of impending death that he wouldn’t have the time and the inclination to even think of such spiritual matters that require a peaceful mind and a lot of contemplation. He would be under such great physical and mental stress and distress that the prospect of taking to Sanyas can hardly occur to him.

The message here is to highlight the potentials and powers of the institution of Sanyas. This state, even if reached for such a short time, is so high and glorious that a vow taken at the last moments of a man’s life can deliver him as well as his ancestors; so one can imagine the immense benefits that accrue if a whole life is spent pursuing it! This realisation would inspire righteous souls who are wise and expedient enough not to wait for the last moment and do the needful while still there is ample time so that they can enjoy its benefits to the full.]

अथ खलु सोम्येमं सनातनमात्मधर्मं वैष्णवीं निष्ठां नासमाप्य प्रब्रूयात् । नानूचानाय नानात्मविदे नावीतरागाय नाविशुद्धाय नानुपसन्नाय नाप्रयतमानसायेति ह स्माहुः । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् । विद्या ह वै ब्राह्मणमाजगाम गोपाय मां शेवधिष्टेऽहमस्मि । असूयकायानृजवे शठाय मा मा ब्रूया वीर्यवती तथा स्याम् ॥३६॥

atha khalu somyemaṁ sanātanamātmadharmam vaiṣṇavīm niṣṭhām nāsamāpya prabrūyāt / nānūcānāya nānātmavide nāvītarāgāya nāvīśuddhāya nānupasannāya nāprayatamānasāyeti ha smāhuḥ / tadetadṛcābhyuktam / vidyā ha vai brāhmaṇamājagāma gopāya māṁ śevadhiṣṭe’hamasmi / asūyakāyānrjave śaṭhāya mā mā brūyā vīryavatī tathā syām // 36 //

36. Oh dear gentleman! A wise man should not preach these great tenets pertaining to the most righteous and auspicious traditional path of leading a renunciate life, which steadily takes the follower forward on the eternal and truthful path to Lord Vishnu, unless he himself is a faithful and strident follower of it. [That is, only those who lead an exemplary life of a renunciate are entitled to teach others about it. They should set an example themselves first before preaching others.]

Other than this, those who are not well versed in the principles of Vedanta and its basic teachings pertaining to the Atma or the immaculate soul (which is pure consciousness), who are not self realised and enlightened about the supreme nature of the Atma as a manifestation of the supreme Brahm (which is also pure consciousness), who is not an honest renunciate (i.e. is a deceitful imposter), who is not dispassionate towards and detached from the sensual objects of this material world, who is not of a pure and clear mind and intellect, who is not humble, pious and polite, and who is not an honest and sincere seeker of the Truth who would endeavour to seek it at all costs—such persons should not preach the teachings of this Upanishad.

The sacred hymn incorporating this doctrine asserting these sanctions or restrictions is this:--‘The Brahm-Vidya (the truthful body of knowledge pertaining to the supreme transcendental Brahm) once assumed a form and came to a Brahmin, seeking his protection. It said to him, ‘Oh Brahmin! Protect me. I am your asset. Do not hand me over (i.e. teach me) to those who are wicked, deceitful, imposters, lowly, stupid, ignorant and pervert. [That is, protect me from unscrupulous and incompetent people!] If you do not do that, I will lose my stupendous potentials, powers and glories’ (36).

यमेवैष विद्याच्छुचिमप्रमत्तं मेधाविनं ब्रह्मचर्योपपन्नम् । अस्मा इमामुपसन्नाय सम्यक् परीक्ष्य  
दद्याद्वैष्णवीमात्मनिष्ठाम् ॥३७॥

yamevaiṣa vidyācchucimapramattaṁ medhāvinam brahmacaryopapannam /  
asmā imāmupasannāya samyak parīkṣya dadyādvaiṣṇavīmātmaniṣṭhām // 37  
//

37. Before teaching or preaching this profound knowledge to those who come seeking it, the aspirant (i.e. the applicant) should be properly judged and tested as to their eligibility to receive this divine knowledge pertaining to the Atma/soul. The criteria used for such judgment are the following:--his ability to observe self restraint, his conquest of desires and yearnings, his purity of thought and purpose, his eagerness to do penances and observe austerities, his lack of pride, ego, haughtiness and arrogance, his alertness and diligence, his intellectual aptitude and astuteness, and his ability to comply with the strict laws of Bramacharya (celibacy, abstinence, self control of the sense organs, ability to undergo hardships and sufferings, ability to concentrate on contemplation and remain steady in his spiritual pursuits, and his eagerness to lead a strict and regimental life of self discipline) . [That is, the knowledge enshrined in this Upanishad should be given only to competent and eligible persons who have the proper aptitude and intellectual depth; otherwise it is likely to be spoilt and misused like giving pure gold to a foolish person who would barter it for worthless things.] (37).

अध्यापिता ये गुरुं नाद्रियन्ते विप्रा वाचा मनसा कर्मणा वा । यथैव तेन न गुरुर्भोजनीयस्तथैव चान्नं न भुनक्ति श्रुतं तत् ॥३८॥

adhyāpitā ye gurum nādrियante viprā vācā manasā karmaṇā vā / yathaiva tena na gururbhojanīyastathaiva cānnaṃ na bhunakti śrutam tat // 38 //

38. Those people who, inspite of being educated, do not show due respect to their elders such as their parents and teachers by their deeds and actions, by their thoughts and behaviours, by their words and speech, the food offered as charity/alms by such people are not to be accepted by those who aspire to attain spiritual welfare and auspiciousness for themselves. Even the teacher of such sinful people should refuse to accept food offered to him by them. Similarly, the scriptures advice that an ascetic, a monk, a hermit, a mendicant, a friar or any one who follows the auspicious and noble path of Truth and self realisation should not accept food (as charity/alms) from such men and their household (38).

गुरुरेव परो धर्मो गुरुरेव परा गतिः । एकाक्षरप्रदातारं यो गुरुं नाभिनन्दति । तस्य श्रुतं तपो ज्ञानं स्रवत्यामघटाम्बुवत् ॥३९॥

gurureva paro dharmo gurureva parā gatiḥ / ekākṣarapradātāraṃ yo gurum nābhinandati / tasya śrutam tapo jñānaṃ sravatyāmaghaṭāmbuvat // 39 //

39. [This verse describes the importance and glory of a moral preceptor, spiritual guide, an all-rounder advisor and a practical teacher, called a Guru. It is deemed here that he is wise, erudite, sagacious, learned and enlightened, simply because only a person who knows something himself can teach it to others; the rest are only imposters.] Guru<sup>1</sup> is the supreme Dharma. That is, one should faithfully serve and follow the advice and instructions of one's Guru just like one must sincerely, diligently and ardently follow one's religiously sanctioned norms of behaviour and righteous codes of conduct, duties and responsibilities, which are collectively called a person's Dharma as established by the scriptures. It also refers to a noble conduct that is conducive to happiness and liberation from the shackles that tie a creature to the deluding and entrapping world.

Likewise, the Guru is the last shelter and refuge for a person (because it is he who guides a person when he is confused, doubtful and perplexed; when he needs support and succour; when he needs a true friend by his side). It is he who guides a person on the correct path and removes all consternations from his mind; it is in him that a disciple can confide without any fear of betrayal, back-stabbing, blackmailing and revenge. It is he who sincerely and selflessly advises a person on all matters as it is in him a person blindly reposts all faith and confidence. In fact, a Guru is the best council.

A person who does not show due respect and honour to the Guru who has selflessly given him the bounty of truthful knowledge, who teaches him and makes him wiser, more knowledgeable, skilled and educated, then all the Gyan (i.e. all the knowledge, all skills, all wisdom, all erudition and all learning that the person has acquired or gained) as well as all the good effects of the Tapa (i.e. penances,

austerities, sufferings and hardships that he has endured in his quest for an all round welfare and enhancement) gradually fade away or decline and lose their potentials, powers, prowess and effects, rendering that unfaithful, ungrateful and disloyal disciple shorn of all glories, fame and moral strengths that should have otherwise accrued to him just like the case where water slowly seeps out of an earthen pot made from half-baked mud or clay. [In other words, if a man does not show due respect to his teacher, he will be cursed and all the good virtues that would have normally given him good name and fame would abandon him. He would be deemed to be unfaithful, ungrateful and disloyal, and would be just like a traitor who has betrayed his country. No good virtues would stay with him. This verse is an extension of the observations made in verse no. 38 above.] (39).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The word *Guru* has two parts---(1) 'Gu'—meaning darkness, and (2) 'Ru'—meaning light. Hence the word 'Guru' means a person who can remove the darkness symbolising ignorance and illusions that has engulfed the disciple from all sides and act as a hindrance or an obstacle in his emancipation and salvation by showing him the truthful path, or lighting his path with the light of knowledge and holding out his hands to support him when he falters.

He is the one who is expected to have risen above self vested interests and keeps the welfare of the disciple as his main objective. He is the one who has transcended the mundane and has acquired sublime awareness of the supreme Reality, because only those who are themselves aware of anything can hope to tell others about it. A true Guru is treated as being equivalent to the 'Trinity Gods'—(1) Brahma, the creator, because he creates or helps to take birth good virtues and noble qualities in his disciple; (2) Vishnu, the sustainer, because he nourishes, sustains and helps to inculcate and develop wisdom and enlightenment in his disciple and leads him on the truthful path; and (3) Shiva, the concluder, because he helps to end, conclude and eliminate ignorance and negative traits in his disciple. He is 'God like' because he functions in all these capacities at the same time, besides being exalted in all knowledge, being virtuous, of high moral character and beyond reproach, being a source of unbound spiritual energy, being self realised and enlightened, and being eternal in the sense that what he advises to his disciple, the path he shows, the light that he lights in the dark heart of the creature, makes him immortal. Therefore, a Guru is honoured for the divine virtues that he represents and embodies, that he teaches and implements in his life, for the divinity, for the Lord and for the personification of the great teachings of the scriptures that he exemplifies. It is not his physical body that is of any value for veneration, for the soul and not the body is venerable.

There is a minor Upanishad called 'Dwayo-panishad' which describes the chief characteristics of a true Guru. It has only seven Mantras.]

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ । स ब्रह्मवित्परं प्रेयादिति वेदानुशासनम् इत्युपनिषत् ॥४०॥

॥ इति शाट्यायनीयोपनिषद् ॥

yasya deve parā bhaktiryathā deve tathā gurau / sa brahmavitparam preyāditi  
vedānuśāsanam / ityupaniṣat // 40 //

// thus ends Shatyayani Upanishad //

40. A person who has great devotion for his chosen God, who is his personal deity whom he worships and adores with great devotion and faith, and shows the same intensity and depth of devotion for his Guru, then such a wise man—who incidentally is known as the one who is enlightened about the true meaning of the supreme Brahm—attains the highest stature attainable by a wise, self realised and enlightened person. That is, by the blessings of his Guru, he rises higher and higher in whatever he does, gains acclaim and achieves greater success in all his endeavours. His education bears him fruit; his name and fame spread far and wide, and in due course of time he is shown the same respect and honour by his descendents, followers or disciples as the case may be as he has shown to his own Guru. This is the proclamation and mandate of the Vedas; this is their edict, this is their assertion and this is the sanction of their canons. Verily, this is what this Upanishad declares. Amen! (40).

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## ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

### Chapter 4: Sanyas Upanishads of the Krishna Yajur Veda

This Chapter contains the following Upanishads of the Krishna Yajur Veda that deal with the theme of Sanyas:-

- 4.1 Avadhuto-panishad
- 4.2 Kathrudro-panishad (verse nos. 1-11)
- 4.3 Varaaha Upanishad (Canto 2, verse nos. 4, 37-45)

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#### (4.1) Avadhut Upanishad:

The Avadhuta Upanishad deals with the concept of Avadhut Sanyas which is a spiritual way of life of an ascetic marked by exemplary renunciation and total detachment from the world and its material sense objects along with its deluding charms as lived by a most enlightened and self-realised person. Emphasis is laid on describing his enlightened thought processes and mental bearing which is central to a man's behaviour, personality and temperament. It is marked by an extreme sense of dispassion, detachment, equanimity, fortitude, holiness and piety. This attitude of the mind and intellect would automatically lead to a commendable state of all-round calmness of demeanours and tranquillity of the mind.

This mental bearing can only happen when the enlightened ascetic has risen above the mundane and has reached a high level of spiritual evolvment when he can actually experience the eclectic Truth about the great tenets of the scriptures outlining the divine and glorious nature of one's Atma and its equivalence with the supreme Atma of the creation known as Brahm. The Avadhut leads a life worth emulating by other spiritual aspirants and marks the pinnacle of self-realisation. The great tenets of Sanyas as espoused in this Upanishad are complimented by the Kath Rudra Upanishad which is the 25<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.

This Upanishad was expounded by the great seer and sage Dattatreya who is considered as an incarnation of the Trinity Gods (Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva the concluder) to answer queries on the subject raised by sage Sankriti. Dattatreya is regarded as the patron saint of all Avadhut Sanyasis.

The word *Avadhuta* is an acronym derived from the first letters of the following words—the letter ‘A’ from *Akshar* meaning imperishable, eternal and infinite; the letter ‘Va’ from *Varenya* meaning worthy of accepting and honouring; the letter ‘Dhu’ referring to the worldly deceit and conceit known as *Dhut*; and the letter ‘Ta’ from the word *Tyakta* meaning to abandon and discard. Hence, the term *Avadhut* refers to the person who moves straight to his aim of life, which is self-realisation and truth-realisation, as well as liberation and deliverance of the soul from the cycle of transmigration and worldly miseries, and obtaining eternity and peace. This is accomplished by discarding all deceits and conceits associated with life in this materialistic world of delusions and artificiality.

The *Avadhuta* state is one of the highest categories of the life of *Sanyas*. This Upanishad details its characteristic features, especially the mental state more than the physical state, and highlights the fact that such people are so engrossed in contemplation that they are free from external pretensions of piety and holiness to such an extent that their external worldly behaviour is often construed as being unconventional and strange. But this oddity is not out of some defect in their character or due to some evil design on their part but out of a high level of spiritual attainment which is not understandable by ordinary people.

अथ ह सां॒कृतिर्भगवन्तमवधू॒तं दत्ता॒त्रेयं॑ परि॒समे॒त्य पप्र॑च्छ । भगव॑न्कोऽवधू॒तस्तस्य॑ का स्थि॒तिः किं॑  
लक्ष्म॑ किं सं॒सर॑णमि॒ति । तं हो॒वाच॑ भग॒वो दत्ता॒त्रेयः॑ पर॒मका॑रुणिकः ॥१॥

atha ha sāṃkṛtirbhagavantamavadhūtaṃ dattātreyaṃ parisametya papraccha  
bhagavanko'vadhūtastasya kā sthitiḥ kiṃ lakṣma kiṃ saṃsaraṇamiti / taṃ  
hovāca bhagavo dattātreyaḥ paramakāruṇikaḥ // 1 //

1. Sage Sankriti<sup>1</sup> went to the great seer and sage Dattatreya<sup>2</sup> and requested him—‘Oh Lord! Please tell me who is an ‘Avadhuta’. What are his characteristic features; what are his unique signs, special qualities and virtues? How does he live, and what characterises his way of life? How does he interact with the world, and what is his way of thinking?’

Hearing his earnest query, the most merciful and compassionate Dattatreya replied—(1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>*Sankriti* was a great devotee of the Sun God and an *Avadhut* *Sanyasi*, a renunciate ascetic of the highest order. He was enlightened and a self-realised wise sage. Two Upanishads of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition are attributed to him—viz. *Akchu* Upanishad and *Avadhut* Upanishad. In the *Akchu* Upanishad, Sankriti has offered his obeisance to the Sun God by praying to him in specially composed hymns in the Lord’s honour, and as a blessing the Sun God revealed this Upanishad to him in which he expounded the eclectic virtues and divine characteristics of those who have attained success in doing Yoga (meditation and contemplation); it describes the seven *Bhumikas* or signs of such success in simple terms. The *Avadhut* Upanishad is an exposition on the grand characteristics of *Avadhut* *Sanyas* which is the highest spiritual stage of renunciation, and was preached by sage Dattatreya to Sankriti. This fact establishes that Sankriti was a contemporary of Dattatreya.

<sup>2</sup>Lord Dattatreya is a fractional incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the supreme Lord of creation in his cosmic form as the *Viraat Purush* from whom the rest of the creation, including the creator *Brahma* himself, was created. The word ‘Dattatreya’ means ‘one

who was given to Atri'. According to mythological accounts, sage Atri and his chaste wife Anusuya were childless, and having a desire to have a son they prayed and did severe penance. All the three gods of the Hindu Trinity, i.e. Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva the concluder appeared before the couple and requested them to ask for a boon. Upon the couple's request, all the three Gods became their sons. Brahma became the sage known as Chandra representing the Moon God, Vishnu became the wise and enlightened sage Dattatreya, and Shiva became the angry sage Durbasa.

According to another version of this story, the three Gods decided to check the chastity vows of the wife of Atri and came disguised to cheat on her. Anusuya was no ordinary lady, and realising their ill intentions she transformed them into her son with three heads and six arms, each head standing for one of the Gods.

Dattatreya is counted amongst the seven celestial sages called the Sapta Rishis. He is said to have created the Som Plant whose juice, called the 'Som Rasa', is used during fire sacrifices as an offering to Gods.

Iconographically, Dattatreya is shown with three heads and six arms holding the emblems of the three Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, viz. a water pot, a conch and a discus, and a trident respectively. A bull representing Dharma (righteousness) is depicted as his mount. Four dogs representing the four Vedas are his constant companion.

The concept of Dattatreya is an attempt by ancient sages and seers to harmonise the three cults of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva that had created an artificial and unwarranted rift in the edifice of religious unity amongst the Hindus.

An Upanishad titled 'Dattatreya Upanishad' appears in the Atharva Veda tradition. He had also preached Prahalad, the great devotee of Lord Vishnu, about the eclectic state of Avadhut Sanyasi in the form of huge python. He had taught many kings and saints on the essential principles of metaphysics and spiritual truth. The prominent ones are the following—

- (i) During Sata Yuga, he had taught Lord Kaartikeya and Lord Ganesh.
- (ii) During Treta Yuga, he had preached king Alark, king Purukhaa and king Aayu.
- (iii) During Dwapar Yuga, he had sage Parashuraam, and kings Kaartaviryarjuna and Yadu as his disciples.
- (iv) In the current Kali Yuga, it is believed that great saints such as Shankaracharya, Gorakhaath, Chaitanya Mahaaprabhu, siddha Naagaarjuna, Gyaneshwar, Eknaath, Tukaaraam etc. had benefited by his teachings.

Being a great Sanyasi himself, he was endowed with stupendous mystical powers called Siddhis. One of the sects of Siddhas regard him as their patron sage.

Sage Dattatreya had made *twenty four Gurus* or teachers. The remarkable thing is that none of these twenty four Gurus was a human being—he had learnt even from the elements (earth, water, fire, air, sky), animals (elephant, deer), birds (pigeon, hawk), reptiles (snake, worm), insects (moth, bee, spider), a fish, the moon and the sun, a child, a girl, a prostitute, an arrow-smith etc. This is a very interesting episode, and is being briefly summarized here.

The following are the twenty four teachers and what Dattatreya learnt from them.

- (1) Earth—the earth sustain all sorts of life and nourishes each creature, even those who virtually eat into her bosom by mercilessly and ruthlessly exploit her and dig into the bowels for his vested self interests.
- (2) Air—the wind moves everywhere, visits all kinds of places but never gets attached to any place or thing. It purifies everything and gives life to all without any discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, race, creed etc. It gives life to a friend as much as it gives life to one's enemy.
- (3) Sky or Akash—the space of the sky accommodates everything and everyone. This taught him to accept and accommodate all in life but remain uninvolved in or unattached with them just like the sky which harbours uncountable things in its bosom but remains totally indifferent to them and unaffected by them.
- (4) Water—it is refreshing and cool and nourishing. No life is possible without water, and it is



regarded as the only universal elixir of life. This taught him to sustain all and be soothing and refreshing for all the creatures. (5) Fire—it gives light, heat and energy. It is upwardly mobile—as is evident from the direction the flame of a raging fire takes. It is all-purifying on the one hand, and burns to ashes whatever impurity is put in it on the other hand. This taught him to welcome everything like the fire but purify them before finally accepting anything, and reduce to ashes all that is impure and tainting for the purity of the Atma. (6) Moon—it appears to wax and wane but really it remains the same. This taught him the fact that the world and the body undergo innumerable changes but the true ‘self’ remains uniform and immutable. (7) Sun—it is the ‘eye’ of the world and gives the latter light, heat and energy in a selfless and unbiased manner. The sun illuminates all but does not need anything to illuminate it and neither does it get tainted by the thing it illuminates. This taught him to illuminate the world and removes its darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge and wisdom while remaining immune to the darkening effects of this world. (8) Pigeon—this is the typical story of a householder’s life. The parent pigeons went out in search of food for their young one day when a bird-catcher spread his nets and caught the offspring. When the parents return, the mother pigeon saw the plight of the young one and jumped into the net. Then the male pigeon too jumps into the net because he cannot live without the family. The bird-catcher was overjoyed. This taught him that worldly attachments lead to ruin and downfall. (9) Python—it stays at one place and swallows any creature that happens to pass that way. He would not forage for food but wait for it to come to him. This taught him to be contented with what comes his way. (10) Ocean—it never overflows when rivers flow into it continuously. It remains contented, calm, un-wanting, fathomless, steady and endless. These are grand virtues that a wise man should inculcate. (11) Moth—it gets attracted to the fire and gets caught and burnt. This taught him not to be caught by the beauty and charm of colour and form of this artificial world. (12) Honey Bee—it collects nectar from numerous flowers and converts them into one homogenous honey. This taught him to imbibe knowledge from whatever source available. A mendicant should also collect a little bit of food from different household instead of relying on one house. (13) Elephant—it is notorious for the sense of touch. During the mating season they rub against each other. This weakness is exploited by hunters to catch them. This weakness taught the sage that he should be wary of the pleasure obtained by touching sensual things in this world. (15) Honey Gatherer—he stealthily takes away all the honey collected by the honey-bee assiduously over a long period of time involving immense labour. This taught him two things—it is useless to hoard things as one day death would snatch everything away, and second it is futile to hoard without sharing things with others because one day they are bound to be snatched from us. (15) Deer—it is by nature attracted to music, a weakness exploited by the hunter to trap it. So, one should be wary of pleasant and sweet sounds emanating from this world because poison is more often than not laced with sugar. (16) Fish—it is attracted to the hook and got caught due to its desire to eat the bait. So, the fish taught him to have control over the taste buds of his tongue. (17) Pingala—she was a prostitute. One day the saint, during his wanderings, came to take rest under the tree on a street where she lived. He watched her eagerly waiting for a customer who never turned up. She finally gave up and went to sleep with the realisation that if she had spent so much time invoking the Lord present in her own bosom, she would not have to wait for him so long. This taught the saint that disappointments come to us when we expect something from this world and hope it to provide us with comfort and joy. The real happiness lies inside. (18) The Kurara Bird (a species of Hawk; an Osprey)—the bird had a small piece of flesh in its beak and other larger and stronger birds pounced on it. Distraught, the Kurara suddenly realised that the cause of its torments is the piece of meat, and so it dropped it from its beak. The other birds swooped on the meat and stopped pursuing the Kurara. This incident taught the saint that if one clings on to material things, no matter how desirable they are, they would never let him live in

peace. It is better to drop them at the earliest; it is better to drop all worldly attachments and devote time to the Truth of life. (19) Child—a child becomes so engrossed in his playthings that he forgets hunger and other bodily needs. Children fight with each other during the course of playing, but soon forget everything. This taught him to remain engrossed in contemplation on the ‘self’ and play with it like the child, remaining immune to the world and even to one’s own bodily problems. A wise man must be innocent like a child—he might get angry at others but never takes anything to heart. The child plays with toys, but suddenly throws them away and wants something new. Likewise, the wise man enjoys the world but never gets hooked to it at the emotional and sentimental plane. (20) A Girl—some people had come to see the girl with a proposal for marriage. She went inside the house to prepare food for them. In the course of grinding spices her bangles clashed with each other and made a disturbing noise. She removed them one by one until one remained—then there was no noise. This taught him that when the mind is distracted by so many things, the man never finds peace. So the best way to concentrate the mind is to remove all extraneous distractions in the form of numerous paths and philosophies, and instead focus on one ultimate Truth preached by the Upanishads, the Truth that is absolute, uniform and immutable. (21) An Arrow-smith—he was so engrossed in his single pointed devotion to his work of preparing the arrows and giving them the right contours, aerodynamic shape and the sharpness to their tip that he was unaware that the king’s entourage was passing by. This taught the saint the importance of single-minded pursuit of one’s goal. (22) Snake—it never makes its own hole and lives in holes made by nature or other animals. A true saint should realise that the Atma has no body of its own but lives on borrowed bodies during its sojourn in this world. Again, the snake effortlessly leaves its dead cuticle to teach him that the Atma would similarly leave this body without any effort, pain or attachment to find a new abode for itself. (23) Spider—it creates a web from itself, moves around it and then swallows it, the supreme Lord has created this world, sustains it and finally retracts it into himself. Further, the spider creates the web and remains trapped in it much like the creature who creates this artificial world by his mind and then remains trapped in it for life. And finally (24) Worm—a wasp caught hold of a worm and kept it in a hole. The wasp kept humming around this worm that was so terrified of the wasp and continuously subjected to this humming that ultimately it became a wasp itself. Similarly, when a man concentrates upon something continuously, whether willingly or unwillingly, he would become one like the subject on which he contemplates. If he contemplates upon the world, he would become one like other mortal ignorant creatures, and if he contemplates upon the sublime and divine he would become sublime and divine himself.]

अक्षरत्वाद्वरेण्यत्वाद्धूतसंसारबन्धनात् । तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यत्वादवधूत इतीर्यते ॥२॥

akṣaratvādvareṇyatvāddhṛtasamśārabandhanāt /  
tattvamasyādilakṣyatvā-davadhūta itīryate // 2 //

2. ‘An Avadhuta<sup>1</sup> is an exalted and realised person who has the following eclectic qualities and divine virtues ingrained in him—he firmly believes in the concept of the imperishable nature of the soul, the pure conscious Atma, as well as in the divine entity that has this unique characteristic, i.e. on the supreme transcendental Brahm; he is worthy of being accepted and honoured as a realised and enlightened soul (i.e. he is pious, holy and divine by nature and behaviour, and is worth emulating and looking up to); he is free from all the fetters that are represented by the various aspects of this entrapping world of ignorance, artificiality and

delusions; and he is one who visibly exemplifies or personifies the great tenets of the scriptures such as ‘Tattwamasi’—‘that supreme essence and truth is you’<sup>1</sup> (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Avadhuta* is an acronym derived from the first letters of the following words—the letter ‘A’ from *Akshar* meaning imperishable, eternal and infinite; the letter ‘Va’ from *Varenya* meaning worthy of accepting and honouring; the letter ‘Dhu’ referring to the worldly deceit and conceit known as *Dhut*; and the letter ‘Ta’ from the word *Lakshaya* meaning aim or target—referring to the person who moves straight to his aim of life, which is self-realisation, truth-realisation, liberation and deliverance of the soul from the cycle of transmigration and worldly miseries, and obtaining eternity and peace without getting entangled in the cobweb-like world and without having any of the evil characteristics and negative attributes that veil an ordinary man who is less wise and enlightened in this world.

<sup>2</sup>The life and thoughts, the behaviour and temperaments of such a realised and enlightened *Avadhut* *Sanyasi* showcase in practical terms what is meant by this ‘Tattwamasi’ and other great sayings of the scriptures that basically teach that each individual creature, including the *Avadhuta*, is an image of the one and non-dual supreme transcendental Lord known as *Brahm*, that there is no distinction between two individuals, and that the ubiquitous *Atma* residing inside all living beings is essentially one and the same; it is a non-dual divine entity that is universal, uniform, immanent, quintessential and personified Consciousness. Hence, there is no cause for any kind of distinction and dichotomy to exist in this world.

There are a number of other Upanishads that describe the great sayings of the Vedas, called the *Mahavakyas*. (i) *Rig Veda*—*Atmabodha Upanishad*. (ii) *Shukla Yajur Veda*—*Paingalo-panishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 2-3, 8; *Mandal Brahmin Upanishad*, *Brahman* 2, section 2, verse no. 5; *Brahman* 2, section 4, verse no. 4; *Brahman* 3, section 1, verse no. 6; *Brahman* 3, section 2, verse no. 2; *Adhyatma Upanishad* of the *Shukla Yajur Veda* tradition, in its verse nos. 2, 10 describe the great saying ‘*So-a-Ham*’, i.e. ‘that essence is me’, and in verse nos. 30-31 describe the other great saying ‘*Tattwamasi*’, i.e. ‘that essence is you’. (iii) *Krishna Yajur Veda*—*Shuk Rahasayo-panishad*, verse no. 22; *Kaivalya Upanishad*, verse no. 16; *Sarwasaar Upanishad*, verse no. 12-14; *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse nos. 32, 37. (iv) *Sam Veda*—*Chandogya Upanishad* of *Sam Veda* tradition describes the great saying ‘*Tattwamasi*’ in great detail in its Canto 6, sections 1-16 with numerous examples when *Uddyalak*, son of *Aruni*, taught this great axiomatic maxim of the Vedas to his son *Shwetketu*. It winds up the exposition with the final declaration of ‘*Tattwamasi*’, ‘that art thou’, in verse no. 3, section 16 of Canto 6. (v) *Atharva Veda*—*Atma Upanishad*.

The term *Tattwamasi* has been explained in detail in the *Shukla Yajur Veda*’s *Paingal Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 3 and 8, and *Adhyatma Upanishad*, verse nos. 30-31; *Sam Veda*’s *Chandogya Upanishad*, Canto 6; and *Krishna Yajur Veda*’s *Sarwasaar Upanishad*, verse nos. 12-14.]

यो विलङ्घ्याश्रमान्वर्णानात्मन्येव स्थितः सदा । अतिवर्णाश्रमी योगी अवधूतः स कथ्यते ॥३॥

yo vilāṅghyāśramānvarṇānātmanyeva sthitaḥ sadā /  
atīvarṇāśramī yogī avadhūtaḥ sa kathyate // 3 //

3. An ascetic and self-realised person who rises above the restrictions imposed by the different Ashrams and Varanas in society<sup>1</sup>, and instead lives a life centred around the *Atma*, the pure Consciousness and the ultimate quintessential Truth of creation which is not only immanent and irrefutable but universally present in an uniform manner in all the creatures as their ‘true self’, is eligible to be called an ‘*Avadhuta*’. [That is,

such a person believes in only one universal truth known as the Atma which is one and the same in all the creatures. He does not distinguish between any two individuals or any two circumstances—because for him all are alike; sufferings and joys are the same for him as are his enemies and friends. He does not recognise anything other than the truthful Atma as being of any consequence and value. For him everything is either the truth in the form of the consciousness known as the Atma which is worthy of being accepted, or false and non-Atma and hence worthy of being abandoned. Obviously, such a person is highly enlightened, wise and erudite; he has understood the essence of the scriptures, and hence he need not adhere or conform to the strict codes of conduct and behaviour as ordained by them for they are basically meant for maintaining orderliness and discipline in the vast society and regulate its functioning, because even without any formal restraint imposed upon him or the guidelines shown to him such a man would himself act in a well regulated and disciplined manner. He would not need someone to tell him what is auspicious, good and righteous, and what is not.] (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The Hindu society has been divided into four Ashrams and Varanas by ancient sages and seers for its regularization and smooth functioning by delegation of authority and powers.

Briefly, the four *Ashrams* are the following—(a) Brahmacharya—this is the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of life in which a person studies the scriptures under the tutelage of a wise teacher. This phase of life is marked by austerities, keeping of vows, observing celibacy, abstinence and continence as well as leading a regimental life style of a boarding school. (b) Grihastha—when a person has studied and prepared himself to face the world, he comes back to his house and enters the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase called Grihastha Ashram which is a householder's life. He marries, raises a family, produces wealth and helps to carry forward the cycle of creation. This is the most important and enjoyable phase as well as the most tough one because on the one hand there are the comforts and pleasure of the world to be enjoyed, and on the other hand there are the various tribulations and miseries of a family life alongside the dealings with this deceptive world with all its accompanying horrifying problems. (c) Vanprastha—this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase when a man hands over the responsibilities of the world to his heirs and renounces his attachments to the house as well as the world, and heads for the forest, leaving the home for his next generation. It is now that he goes on pilgrimage and prepares for the final stage of his life, and (d) Sanyas—this is the 4<sup>th</sup> and last stage of life when there is complete cutting-off of all the ties with the world, spending time in contemplation and meditation, living a life of total renunciation, and begging for food for survival while single mindedly endeavouring for emancipation and salvation. This phase of Sanyas also has many stages depending upon the spiritual elevation and accomplishments of the aspirant, viz. Kutichak, Bahudak, Hansa, Paramhans, Turiyatit and Avadhut.

These four Ashrams, their characteristic features and virtues are described in detail in an Upanishad called 'Ashramo-panishad' belonging to the Atharva Veda tradition.

The four *Varanas* are the following—(a) Brahmins\*—the learned and teaching class; a wise one well-versed in the knowledge of the ultimate Truth about the supernatural Being called Brahm. They also presided over religious functions as priests, because these functions were central to life in the Vedic period; (b) Kshatriyas—they were the warrior, fighting, kingly class. They were assigned the job of giving protection to the society, dispensing justice and maintaining general law and order. (c) Vaishyas—they were the trading and farming class responsible for commerce and wealth generation. They provided for the necessities for a comfortable life. And finally (d) the Shudras —the service class of people whose main function

was to free the other three classes from the humdrums of daily chores and concentrate their energies to the particular jobs assigned to those classes to which they belonged.

\*The salient features of Brahmins are the following—they should possess these noble qualities—(1) ‘Riju’-be expert in the Rig and the Yajur Vedas, (2) ‘Tapa’-should be involved in doing penances, observing austerities and enduring sufferings for the welfare of the soul and the society, (3) ‘Santosh’-be contented and satisfied, (4) ‘Kshamaa’-to be forgiving and tolerant, (5) ‘Sheel’-to have such virtues as good character, dignity, decorum and virtuousness, (6) ‘Jitendriya’-to have self control over the sense organs, (7) ‘Data’-to be a giver, one who sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of others, (8) ‘Gyani’-one who is well learned, wise, enlightened and erudite, (9) ‘Dayaalu’-to be merciful and compassionate. [Shatpath Brahmin.] An entire Upanishad called Vajra-shuchiko-panishad, belonging to the Sam Veda tradition is devoted to the subject. The eclectic virtues of Brahmins have been expounded in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahmin 5 as well as in Canto 3, Brahmin 8, verse no. 10

These four classes of the human race were created from the single father, the Viraat or Brahma. Their origins are indicative of the different jobs that they were assigned so as to enable the creator perform the task of governance just like a king assigns separate jobs to his different ministers. But it must be clearly understood here that each class of the human race was like a part of the body of the Supreme Being, and even as a man feels disfigured and handicapped as well as feels the pain equally if his leg is cut off from the rest of his body as he feels when his arm or head is severed, the Lord feels betrayed and hurt when even one of his sons is subjected to humiliation and pain. The four classes had specific jobs cut for them so that the society could function smoothly.

The Brahmins have their origin from the mouth of Brahma the creator. Since the mouth is used to give advice and teach others, the primary job of the Brahmins was to act as moral guide to their brethren. The four Vedas, which are repository of all knowledge that exist, were also created from the mouth of Brahma; hence these Brahmins were considered most wise and learned. The arms are metaphors for strength and powers; they are used to protect and help others. Hence, the Kshatriyas, who were created from the arms of Brahma, were those sons of his who would give the needed protection and security to their other brethren. In order to feed his creation, Brahma had to toil and labour to provide for the maintenance and financial and material well being of the society for merely teaching and protecting would not suffice without some one to take care of the other necessities of life. So he created the Vaishyas from his thighs, symbolising labour, to pick up the mantle of mundane affairs of life. But there must be someone who would do the daily chores, such as tilling the fields, doing the harvesting, washing and cleaning, and all other such odd jobs. This was assigned to the Shudras created from Brahma’s feet symbolising service.

Yajur Veda 31<sup>st</sup> Chapter, 11<sup>th</sup> Mantra says that Brahmins are the mouth of society, the Kshatriyas are its arms, Vaishyas are its stomach or abdomen, and Shudras are its legs. The body is regarded as a symbol of the society. As is obvious in this analogy, all these four units of the body must function properly and in close cooperation with each other in order that the body can survive and live comfortably and carry on with its assigned duties in an orderly fashion. The mouth is important because it is the medium by which the body takes food and speaks; the arms procure food and gives protection to the body against enemies; the stomach digests food and supplies the whole body with the energy needed by it; the abdomen holds all the internal organs; and the legs carry the body wherever it wants to go such as the place where food is available. Since food is the basis necessity of life, this instance is cited here. And the logic can be extended to everything else. Each component of the society must work properly in order that the whole society survives; each component is as vital as the other; each has its own importance in the bigger picture.

The Paingalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse no. 7 and Canto 2, verse nos. 3 describe how the three basic Gunas of Sata, Raja and Tama were used by the supreme Brahm to create different types of creatures in this creation. Other Upanishads which give a graphic detail of these four Varanas are the Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 1/4/11-15 and the Aitereyo-panishad, 1/1/4. The Niralambo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 10, states the reason for the classification of the society in four classes. The Subalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse 6, and Canto 2, verse 1 describes the origin of these four classes in society.

The Mantriko-panishad, verse no. 5, the Shewata-shwatar Upanishad, Canto 4, verse 4-5, and the Paingalo-panishad, Canto 1, verse no. 3 narrate how the colour of the skin was used symbolically to indicate the dominance of one or the other of the three basic Gunas, the Sata, the Raja and the Tama, in a particular individual that determines to which class of society he belongs, and which formed the basis of this classification which depend heavily on the quality displayed by an individual to become eligible to belong to one or the other class. The Gunas displayed by him holds a greater importance than his mere birth in a particular section. ]

तस्य प्रियं शिरः कृत्वा मोदो दक्षिणपक्षकः । प्रमोद उत्तरः पक्ष आनन्दो गोष्पदायते ॥४॥

tasya priyaṃ śiraḥ kṛtvā modo dakṣiṇapakṣakah /  
pramoda uttarah pakṣa ānando goṣṭadāyate // 4 //

4. For such an exalted ascetic, whatever is very dear to him, i.e. is his 'Priya', is located in the region of the head<sup>1</sup>.

Being in a constant state of eternal happiness and joyous abandon, he feels happiness and delight everywhere he sees or goes; there is happiness and joy to the right of him and to the left of him. This fact is symbolically depicted by his right and left arms—the right arm symbolising 'Moda' and the left symbolising 'Pramod'. [The words Moda and Pramod both refer to happiness, joy, delight and pleasures.]

With such an eclectic state of existence overflowing and submerged in eternal sense of 'Anand' (extreme bliss and ecstasy), he is like a cow<sup>1</sup> whose feet supports its holy body. [Here the ascetic is compared to a cow to indicate that he is as revered and holy as the sacred animal.] (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The dearest entity for a wisened and enlightened ascetic is the supreme Brahm symbolically located in the exalted point of the body, which is the head. According to Yoga Upanishads, Brahm resides in the area of the head called the Brahm Randhra (i.e. the area around the cranium), in the Vyom Chakra as the eclectic sky element, as well as in the Agya Chakra located in the tri-junction of the two eyebrows and the root of the nose (i.e. the area of the cerebrum) as the virtues of wisdom, erudition, enlightenment, insight and knowledge. It is here that the 'third eye' of deep insight and ability to think and analyse is located. Brahm is also depicted as being present a little further from the tip of the nose, symbolising the vast and fathomless sky element. That is the reason why a divine halo of diffused glow of light is witnessed around the head of self-realised and Brahm-realised persons.

The mind and intellect (i.e. the brain) also have their location in the head, and since Brahm is an embodiment of wisdom, erudition, enlightenment and knowledge, this mind-intellect apparatus is an apt symbol of Brahm.

Brahm is the Emperor of creation, and emperors have their residences on a raised or elevated ground such as a hill or mound, called the 'capitol' or 'citadel'. The high location is symbolic in nature to indicate that this is the seat of final authority and

the central government. In the individual creature's case, the head is clearly such a seat because the mind and the intellect is the controlling authority of everything in this world.

<sup>2</sup>The cow is regarded as a holy animal, and by alluding to it in this verse it is meant that once the ascetic develops this divine view regarding his own body as not being merely an entity having physical organs that are meant to enjoy the transient sensual pleasures and comforts of the material world and its sense objects but to enjoy the eternal bliss obtained by realisation of the Atma, he becomes as holy as the cow. The four legs cited here represent the four aspects of self-realisation mentioned in this verse—viz. Priya, Moda, Pramoda and Anand. Basically, all the four refer to the divine state of ecstasy and bliss obtained when one becomes self and Brahm realised. This state is perpetual and it constantly accompanies the ascetic wherever he is and in whatever condition he is in. It ensures that he remains in a constant state of bliss and joyous mood of self-realisation, unconcerned by the world and its attendant sorrows and miseries.

A very similar concept occurs in Taittiriyo-panishad, 2/5.]

गोवालसदृशं शीर्षे नापि मध्ये न चाप्यधः । ब्रह्म पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठेति पुच्छाकारेण कारयेत् । एवं चतुष्पदं कृत्वा ते यान्ति परमां गतिम् ॥५॥

govālasadr̥śaṃ śīrṣe nāpi madhye na cāpyadhaḥ / brahma pucchaṃ pratiṣṭheti pucchākāreṇa kārayet / evaṃ catuspadaṃ kṛtvā te yānti paramāṃ gatim // 5 //

5. A wise ascetic should not treat this symbolic cow's head, middle part of the body or the legs as symbolising Brahm. [Then what is to be regarded as an emblem of Brahm? The answer is--] The tail of the cow represents the established glory of Brahm<sup>1</sup>. A wise person who knows Brahm in this way is able to obtain the most exalted stature which is equivalent to Brahm<sup>2</sup> (5).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>It is believed that the dignity and self-esteem of the cow is in its tail though it is at the rear of its body. The tail hides the cow's private parts, the vagina and the womb in which the embryo is conceived. It alludes to the fact that Brahm hides inside his bosom the entire secrets of creation. Further, it is noticed that the cow uses the tail to wave off flies etc. that keep tormenting it by flapping them with the brush of hair at the end of the long tail. This is symbolic of the effort made by the wise creature to ward off worldly torments that constantly nagging at him by relying upon Brahm. That is, a person who has inculcated wisdom as expounded by the Upanishads realises that the body is not the real thing to be worried about or indulged with, but attention should be diverted to higher targets of life such as contemplating upon the Truth and the proper path to be followed so that liberation and deliverance of the soul, or spiritual emancipation and salvation can be achieved in the least possible time. The wisdom of the Upanishads wizens him about the fact that the organs of the body have a natural tendency to be teased by their respective sense organs because these organs have an inherent affinity for them. This situation is like the flies constantly teasing and causing irritation for the cow which uses its tail to ward them off. Similarly, the wise ascetic should use the wisdom of the Upanishads to ward off the attractions of the body and the sense objects of the world in the light of their entangling effect on his soul and keeping him restless and agitated.

The tail also represents the fag end of the cow's body, implying that when the creation comes to an end, it ends in Brahm. When cowherds try to tame a calf or

control a cow or a bull, they usually catch hold of the tail, indicating that a wise person can tame this world by holding on to Brahm.

It also might mean that by following Brahm, one can reach one's spiritual goal in life just like young cowherds who get lost in the vast stretches of land while accompanying the cattle set loose to graze at will catch hold of their tails and follow them calmly back to their homes without worrying to find out the way back. This is because the animal has an uncanny sense that helps it to trace its path correctly back to its home. The catching of the tail also ensures that the cow does not run and gets lost, or goes beyond the reach of the cowherd and leave him perplexed and lost in the wilderness, not knowing what to do.

<sup>2</sup>This observation means that one who sees Brahm not only in the physical existence of creation represented by the body of the cow which gives milk but even in its fag end or 'tail end' is really aware of Brahm's all-incorporating nature. A man usually pays scant attention to an animal's tail and judges its worth by examining its body. So this statement means that even the most inconsequential and lowly aspect of creation that is usually sidelined is as important as the prominent aspects. Each aspect and unit of creation is a manifestation of Brahm, and one should not show disrespect or neglect even the lowliest and the humble even as the cow has great respect for its tail.

It is pertinent to note here that a major Upanishad, the Bṛhad Aranyaka 1/1/1-2 belonging to the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition uses the metaphor of a sacrificial horse to describe Brahm. The Aitareya Upanishad of Rig Veda tradition, Canto 1, section 2, verse nos. 2-3 says that Brahm created three bodies in the beginning of creation where his personified forms as various Gods could take up their residences—a cow, a horse and a human.]

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ॥६॥

na karmaṇā na prajāyā dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvamānaśuḥ // 6 //

6. The state of eternity and attainment of the exalted stature of divinity cannot be obtained by a person either by doing various deeds, or with the help of his subjects (such as sons, kith and kin), and also with the aid of money and power<sup>1</sup>.

The only way (and easy one at that) to achieve it is the path of 'Tyag<sup>2</sup>' [This is the eclectic spiritual path of Sanyas.] (6).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>That is, if one believes that one can obtain eternity and the exalted stature of being one like the Supreme Being by doing righteous deeds such as doing great religious sacrifices, making charities and giving donations, then it is not possible and he is very mistaken. Had it been so, poor mendicants, hermits, ascetics, sages and friars would have had no chance of ever attaining this auspicious niche for the soul and it would be dominated by the rich and powerful who can spend large sums of money on such deeds.

Similarly, just like the case that the medicine has to be taken by the patient himself and not by his son to cure a disease, attainment of spiritually advanced stature and reaching of the pinnacle of divine spiritual glory is to be achieved by the person concerned himself by his own efforts and not by the aid of anybody else. That is, it is futile to believe that the son or one's kith and kin would do some great religious sacrifice in order to enable the person to go high up in the heaven or obtain liberation and deliverance for his soul. He would have to tread the path himself. A similar idea has been expressed in Kathrudra Upanishad, verse no. 13. This is the 25<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.



<sup>2</sup>Tyag—The concept of Tyag (pronounced as “Tyaag”) is an important and central to Hindu philosophy of religion and finds a prominent place in the scriptures. Broadly speaking it covers such virtues as to give up something that is very dear to one, voluntarily and willingly for a noble cause; to surrender; to renounce; to relinquish; to make sacrifice; to forsake; to be dispassionate and detached; to resign and forfeit one’s claim and rights. It assumes different connotations under different circumstances, and all these definitions would apply to the eclectic concept of Tyag depending upon the different situations one is dealing with.

Tyag usually involves sincere giving away and renouncing something for an auspicious and noble cause. When one develops natural dispassion towards the charms of the material world, when one does deeds selflessly without expecting any rewards from them, when one sacrifices his own comforts and pleasures for the good and welfare of others, when one remains a neutral observer to this world and forsakes all involvement in its affairs, when one does not yearn for anything and gives up his rights cheerfully and willingly, when one forsakes falsehood, non-truths, delusions and misconceptions, when one assumes a state of total neutrality and develops exemplary equanimity and fortitude—he is said to be observing Tyag in its purest form. Merely physically abstaining from material comforts of the world but mentally very much attached to them or even remembering them, or not doing deeds in the false belief that doing deeds would entangle him in this world or pretending to be a renunciate monk is no Tyag at all. Rather, it is worse than openly remaining involved because it is pretension and deceit which is abhor-able and demeaning for the soul.

The great spiritual and metaphysical importance and significance of Tyag has been succinctly summed up in Kaivalya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda in its verse no. 3 which says that one can access the essential elixir of eternity and bliss, called Amrit, only by observing Tyag and not by doing numerous deeds (including religious sacrifices), or by the help of subjects (such as sons, family members, priests etc.), or by the help of wealth (such as by making huge donations and doing great charities).

The immense importance of non-involvement in deeds as a significant form of Tyag is highlighted in Geeta pronounced by Lord Krishna, in its Canto 5, verse nos. 7-9 which briefly declare that he who has transformed himself as an embodiment of Yoga in its various connotations, who is a living example of Yoga and what it stands for, who has cleansed his self and his soul from all impurities and taints, who has learnt to exercise self-restraint of the sense organs and his inner self (mind), who sees no difference between himself and others—such a man remains un-involved in deeds in spite of doing everything in a normal way. He who has developed exemplary equanimity and dispassion, who treats everything alike should realise that he is not doing anything at all. He must realise that the various deeds done by the body are the normal functioning of its sense organs, such as seeing, hearing, touching and feeling, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, giving, accepting, arising and lying down, getting excited and feeling low etc. The best approach is to offer these deeds as an offering to the Supreme Being, and this would absolve the aspirant of all ill-effects of such deeds. This is called Tyag because one does not expect any rewards from these deeds, thereby remaining indifferent and unconcerned with them as if they do not belong to him at all.

The Bhagvad Geeta, 18/2, gives a general definition of Tyag as giving up the fruits of all actions, i.e. not expecting any rewards of deeds and doing them selflessly and dispassionately. It categorizes Tyag or abandonment of actions into three basic types—viz. Satvic, Rajasic and Tamasic.

Satvic Tyag consists of performing one’s duties but doing them selflessly and dispassionately, being detached from them and their fruits, or not expecting anything from them. Rajasic Tyag is not doing anything because it entails a lot of physical exertion or difficult to do. Tamasic Tyag is doing deeds in a confused manner and under delusory effects of ignorance. [Refer Bhagvad Geeta, 18/7-9.]

It ought to be noted that auspicious deeds such as Daan (charity, alms giving, donation), Yagya (any religious exercise) and Tapa (sufferance for some noble cause, observing austerities and doing penances) should not be given up on the pretext of Tyag, but done without expecting any reward.

If one is unable to achieve anything desired, and realising it is inaccessible for him pretends to forgo it by saying that he is renouncing it or surrendering his right over it or giving it up for some noble objective or did not wish to have it, he is only cheating himself as well as others. Similarly, if anything is forcibly taken away by a stronger opponent and cannot be retrieved, giving it up is not Tyag.

Tyag has two vital aspects—Daan and Vairagya. Daan is giving away voluntarily and without coercion to those who are in need, such as making donation, charity and alms. Vairagya is renunciation when one becomes wise and enlightened about the truth and reality of existence, about the falsehood of the material world and anything related with it, about the futility of possessing anything that is perishable and transient and which acts as an obstacle hindering one's pursuit of his spiritual goal.]

स्वैरं स्वैरविहरणं तत्संसरणम् । साम्बरा वा दिगम्बरा वा । न तेषां धर्माधर्मौ न मेध्यामेध्यौ । सदा सांग्रहण्येष्ट्याश्चमेधमन्तर्यागं यजते । स महामखो महायोगः ॥७॥

svairam svairaviharaṇam tatsamsaraṇam / sāmbarā vā digambarā vā / na teṣāṃ dharmādharmau na medhyāmedhyau / sadā sāṃgrahanyeṣṭyāśva-medhamantaryāgaṃ yajate / sa mahāmakho mahāyogaḥ // 7 //

7. The ascetics are at liberty to behave as they want. [That is, no restrictions are placed upon them to do this and not to do that. It is left to their own wisdom to decide what is auspicious and righteous, and what is not. This freedom is based on the premise that once a person has become an ascetic or taken the sincere vows of Sanyas, he would exercise the greatest of self-restraint and never do anything inauspicious or unrighteous even though freedom is given to him. This is because he is deemed to be a self-realised, wise, enlightened and exalted man. It is not expected of him to act in a frivolous, irresponsible, deceitful and undisciplined manner.]

For example, so many of them wear clothes, and there are so many who remain naked. For the exalted self-realised and enlightened ascetics there is no such concept as one thing being auspicious and righteous and the other not, or one thing being pure and holy and the other not. [This is because they see nothing but the Atma or the ultimate Truth everywhere, and therefore they do not distinguish between any given two entities. For them all are alike; a child for them is the same as the old man, a woman is likewise the same as the man. They have developed an eclectic sense of neutrality and profound equanimity marked by great equity and total detachment. There is another reason for the development of this temperament—they are so deeply engrossed in contemplation and meditation upon the Truth and the Atma that they are virtually in a perpetual state of Samadhi, a trance-like state when one is not even aware of his own body, what to talk of the external world, and hence such a man cannot distinguish between any two entities because he is not even aware of their presence or importance; he does not see any difference between them and treats them equally.]

From the point of view of a man's natural tendency of collecting and hoarding assets, such enlightened ascetics collect their sense organs and keep them restrained. This is their equivalence of collecting and hoarding assets of the material world as done by ordinary men<sup>1</sup>. [The sense organs have a natural tendency to move towards

this material world and spread out in every direction much like the wealth that is spread in all the corners of the world and is to be collected with great effort and stored in a treasury by a man. In other words, a wise ascetic reins in his sense organs and prevents them from moving out towards the world and its charms, and instead diverts their efforts towards enabling him to achieve success in his spiritual pursuit. He uses his mind to contemplate and his sense organs to help him to meditate and help to maintain the strict discipline and observe the rigours of a renunciate way of life meant for him.]

The external fire sacrifice done by others, such as the great Ashwa Medh Yagya (the horse sacrifice), is replicated by them internally in a symbolic manner by sacrificing the sense organs and the mind by exercising greatest of self restraint on their natural wayward tendency and their worldly yearnings and desires. They turn inwards and spend time on contemplation and meditation on the pure 'self', the consciousness known as the Atma. This is their Ashwa Medh Yagya<sup>2</sup>.

For a truly enlightened ascetics, this is the greatest of Yoga (meditation) and the greatest of Yagyas (fire sacrifices) (7).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This paragraph can be explained in a different way. A man works hard and earns money and collects assets which are clearly visible to every person. For example, his salary is known to all, the yield of his field is known to all, and even the stock of his go-down is also there for everyone to see. But he would not let others know about his personal finances, how he keeps his personal wealth and how he hides his gold and cash. The open harvest of a farmer's land is hidden by him in his barn as it becomes his personal property after he has paid the labourers who worked for him their due. He hides the produce for fear of thieves, tax-collectors and even from his enemies who are jealous of his affluence. In other words, he collects known assets openly from the external world but hides them in a secret place known only to him, and he protects these assets from inquisitive and preying eyes. Similarly, the sense organs have a natural tendency to rest on their respective objects in this external world. The wise Avadhut ascetic withdraws them from these external objects and hides them in his own self by restraining them and using their powers and strength to achieve spiritual high. This is a metaphoric way of saying that he collects his sense organs from the external world and fixes them inside.

<sup>2</sup>Turning inwards and contemplating upon the Atma is a great spiritual activity that is compared to doing the famous Ashwa Medh Yagya or the horse sacrifice because the offering here is made by controlling and sacrificing the freedom of the mind and the sense organs which are no less restless and outwardly mobile than the horse. They are equivalent to a wild horse as all of them have a natural urge to gallop away towards their respective sense objects in this world, allured by the enticing charms and countless attractions proffered by them. It is difficult to tear them away from these objects and teach them self discipline and restraint much like the wild horse clamouring to break away from its shackles and cantor away to freedom, throwing its bridle, breaking its harness and bothering the least about the rider. The severe Tapa, i.e. the observance of austerity, doing of penance and sufferings undertaken by the spiritual aspirant are no less than important and rigorous than the ones observed when doing the elaborate fire sacrifice called Ashwa Medh Yagya.

If the restraint of the mind and the sense organs is equivalent to restraining the sacrificial horse, the actual practice of Yoga, i.e. the contemplation and meditation done to realise the 'true self' or the pure conscious Atma, is like physical rituals during the horse sacrifice when oblations and offerings are made to the deity worshipped, which however in this case is the Atma. Since the Atma is the micro level representative of the supreme transcendental Consciousness known as Brahm, it follows that the ultimate deity worshipped by contemplating upon the inner self and the Atma is Brahm. The sacred fire in this case would be represented by the pure

consciousness illuminating the inner self, and the offering are made by doing Yoga involving many exercises and auspicious observances. The various Yoga Upanishads enumerate them in great detail.

Like the Ashwa Medh Yagya which establishes a king's fame and glory not only in his own kingdom but even in distant lands as a person who does noble deeds, undertakes great religious exercises, is pious and god-fearing, gives huge donations and make large charities as a necessary accompaniment of such Yagyas, and generally bestows him with welfare and great auspicious rewards, bestowing him with honour and respect besides granting him lordship over a large area on earth if he is able to successfully accomplish it, this internal Yagya provides the practitioner with equal auspicious rewards, but this reward is much higher, more valuable and spiritually better as it pertains to the Atma which is eternal and imperishable as compared to worldly rewards gained by external Ashwa Medh Yagya. This sacrifice gives him access to the supreme Truth of this creation, bestows him with great mystical powers called the various Siddhis, and paves the path for his final liberation and deliverance from this world and its endless cycle of ignorance and delusions as well as birth and death along with their endless chain of miseries and torments. A person who has been successful in this internal fire sacrifice gains access to spiritual glories and finds liberation that sets him free from all the fetters that shackle an ordinary man to the body and its sense organs; he is no more bound to this gross world as he has become the ethereal entity known as the Atma. This is because he has now realised that his true 'self' is the pure consciousness known as the Atma, and not the gross body consisting of both the gross sense organs as well as the subtle mind-intellect complex. He gains honour and respect much like a great and noble king who has successfully done the Ashwa Medh Yagya.

Again, as only kings who were strong and fearless could successfully complete the Ashwa Medh Yagya because the if the sacrificial horse was caught by an opponent and held captive, it was considered a defilement of the sacrifice and invited wars to liberate the horse which only powerful kings could afford and win, it follows that only strong-willed, really wise and enlightened and sincere spiritual aspirant can successfully do such internal fire sacrifice as envisioned and described in this verse. It may be possible to subdue an enemy with the strength of the arm of a strong and well-trained army, but it is virtually impossible to control one's own self and one's own sense organs; it is very easy to lecture others but most difficult to implement what one preaches.

The concept of doing the great fire sacrifice internally as opposed to doing it externally is also described in detail in Pran Agnihotra Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition. Its verse nos. 21-22 especially are very explicit on this subject.

A brief word on the Ashwa Medh Yagya would be in order. The Ashwa Medh Yagya is called the horse sacrifice because a horse is sacrificed in it. It is most ancient sacrifice and can be successfully done by very powerful kings or emperors. The horse is let free to go anywhere it wants for one year and the land where it sets foot is either annexed by treaties or by force in war. The actual sacrifice is though for only three days. The sacrificial horse is protected by the army and if by chance it is killed by the opposing king then the sacrifice is deemed to be defiled. In practical terms, it was a means to spread a king's area of influence.]

कृत्स्नमेतच्चित्रं कर्म । स्वैरं न विगायेत्तन्महाव्रतम् । न स मूढवल्लिप्यते ॥८॥

kṛtsnametaccitraṃ karma / svairam na vigāyettanmahāvratam / na sa mūḍhavallipyate // 8 //

8. In this way, the entire character and behavioural pattern of such ascetics are unique and more often than not unconventional, baffling, mysterious, funny and erratic. One should not make any kind of derogatory remarks against them, insinuate or insult them, call them disgraceful, lowly, vile, possessed of evil spirit etc., or in any way cast any kind of demeaning and wild aspersions on them for their unconventional, strange and odd behaviour which is often inexplicable and inconsistent with the norms set down for civilized, auspicious and righteous conduct in the society.

This is their great sacrifice that they bear with stoic fortitude and calmness sneers and comments of the world; it is their great sacrifice that they have forsaken artificiality and pretensions so much evident in the formalities and niceties observed by ordinary people in this world. They do not adhere to the norms created for the artificial world because they do not subscribe to the principle of creating an artificial and false sense of being civil, cultured, well-behaved and learned by observing codes of conduct and decorum at the cost of freedom of the soul. Besides this, their heightened level of self-realisation and spiritual enlightenment has turned their attention inwards towards their conscious 'self', their Atma, so much so that they remain oblivious of their body and what it does, as well as unconcerned of how the world would treat them and respond to their actions and behaviour. They are so lost in the bliss obtained by contemplation and meditation and the subsequent experiencing of the presence of the supreme transcendental Divinity inside their own self as the pure conscious Atma that they do not have the time or the inclination to bother about what others think of them and how they treat them.

Such spiritually enlightened and self-realised exalted ascetics do not remain attached to this world and therefore need not bother to observe worldly formalities and niceties that are usually followed by ordinary people who remain busy in appeasing the world and trying to pretend to be civil, well-behaved and cultured in this artificial world so that they are given respect and honour but in the process are actually robbing their Atma of its inherent freedom and liberty to do what it wishes. [The Atma is an ethereal entity, and therefore is as free as the wind and the sky. The Atma cannot be bound by fetters; it cannot be shackled; it can fly to wherever it wants, think what it wants, and do what it wishes to do.]

Hence, wise and renunciate ascetics roam around freely without getting perturbed and being burdened by the necessity of observing useless and perfunctory formalities which act like millstones around the neck of less enlightened men. They roam freely without being encumbered by anything, by being deterred by anything, or getting attached to anything. They are not concerned whether what they do is correct or not because it is deemed that all their deeds and actions would be auspicious and righteous. [This is because it has already been said that they have obtained full control over their senses organs, both those of perception and those of action, so there is no scope of these organs doing anything that is not considered auspicious and righteous by scriptural standards. The ascetic has no time for the external world and neither the inclination of indulging in worldly pursuits or the need to please this world at any cost, so the question of either appeasing the world or getting annoyed and perturbed by it does not arise as far as they are concerned.] (8).

[Note--This is the way of life led by truly self-realised and renunciate ascetics who have not only detached from the external world of sense objects but remain submerged in experiencing the bliss of self-realisation and Brahm-realisation. They are unaware of their bodies and how it acts; their mind is so engrossed in contemplation and meditation that it has no time and inclination to bother how to behave nicely that would be acceptable to the world. So to accuse them of behaving strangely and unconventionally is only showing ignorance of their heightened state of

enlightenment and exemplary detachment. They do not come within the purview of codes of conduct that are applied to ordinary persons who appear to be observing imaginary and artificial niceties and formalities of the material world and think that they are cultured and civilized, whereas actually they are only pretending to be so because they have never witnessed the inherent exhilaration obtained when the soul is set free like the bird. The soul of ordinary people is tied in worldly fetters and it has forgotten its inherent free nature, so such worldly people act in an artificial manner and become pretenders of freedom. They may dance the whole night, appear to be merry externally and enjoying the world to the hilt, but internally they are unhappy, disquiet, distressed and most stressed-out. A non-enlightened man lives an artificial life of bondage—bonded to his body and its myriad needs and problems, to the world and its own set of needs and problems, besides the requirement to observe formalities and maintain artificial relationships. The soul actually knows no such things and needs to observe no formalities or codes of conduct because it is eternally free and an ethereal entity that is all-pervading and all-encompassing.

It ought to be noted here that the oddity in the external behaviour of self-realised ascetics is not due to any defect in their mind-intellect or their character but due to the fact that they have tasted the divine elixir of spiritual bliss and ecstasy effusing from their inner self and therefore they are not concerned with external formalities or enjoyments. They are not mentally sick, evil, pervert or reckless, they are not lunatics or deranged in any manner. Some of the oddities in their behaviour are their not taking regular bath or meals or attending to nature's call. They may not pray regularly and perform religious sacraments daily which seems unrighteous on the face of it. But it should be noted that this is due to the fact that they worship the supreme Lord not somewhere in the external heaven but inside their own Atma, the pure consciousness residing in their own bosom. This highly evolved state of his mental faculty is clearly highlighted in the following verses.]

यथा रविः सर्वरसान्प्रभुङ्क्ते हुताशनश्चापि हि सर्वभक्षः । तथैव योगी विषयान्प्रभुङ्क्ते न लिप्यते  
पुण्यपापैश्च शुद्धः ॥९॥

yathā raviḥ sarvarasānprabhuṅkte hutāśanaścāpi hi sarvabhakṣaḥ /  
tathaiva yogī viṣayānprabhuṅkte na lipyate puṇyapāpaiśca śuddhaḥ // 9 //

9. Just like the fact that the Sun accepts all sorts of oblations offered to it and the Fire can devour anything put into it with neither of them affected at all by such offerings, an ascetic remains detached from and indifferent to all the sense objects of this world and their inherent attractions, charms, comforts and pleasures inspite of his having to use them in the course of his routine life in this world. Therefore, he remains untainted and untouched by them and remains as pure and uncorrupted as if he has had no contact with them at all.

Since he is not involved internally (mentally, intellectually and emotionally) with any of the sense objects of pleasures and comforts in this material world, he is not tarnished by their tainting effects, and neither can he be accused of having committed any sins or misdeeds pertaining to their use or contact, nor pretending to be too upright and righteous by not being attached to these objects. In fact, he is completely unaware of their existence at all for all practical purposes (9).

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् । तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति  
न कामकामी ॥१०॥

āpūryamāṇamacalapratīṣṭhaṁ samudramāpaḥ praviśanti yadvat /  
tadvatkāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve sa śāntimāpnoti na kāmakāmī // 10 //

10. Similarly, just like the vast ocean filled with water has no desire whatsoever of acquiring more water to replenish its stock but accepts the water when it is incessantly pours into it by rivers etc., the ascetic too accepts whatever comes his way calmly and with stoic indifference though he has no desire for anything. That is, inspite of being surrounded by the enticing objects of the material world which give comfort and pleasure, he remains unruffled by their illusive and transient charms which are no less than traps to ensnare him in their vice-like grip. He remains unattached to them; he maintains his mental peace, poise and calm demeanours. He is never in dearth of these noble and eclectic virtues, thereby remaining ever contented and fulfilled like the vast ocean cited here<sup>1</sup>.

Ordinary men who have desire and yearning for enjoyment of the pleasures and comforts offered by the sense objects of this material world cannot ever hope to achieve this state of calmness and peace (10).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>Rivers continue to pour their water in the ocean, but it never boils over and submerges the land due to this continuous pouring. The heat of the sun continuously evaporates its water, there are hot summers and rainless days, there might be drought on the land, the rivers and lakes dry up and there is all round shortage of water so much so that crops dry up and people die due to thirst, but the ocean never dries up, nor its level of water falls short of the normal mark. Rivers may at one time flood the plains and inundate huge tracts of land, or completely dry up to leave a parched bed, but the ocean never breaks its laws and never submerges the earth. Come to think of it—the ocean occupies roughly three-fourths of the surface of the earth as compared to rivers which are not even seen from the outer space, and had the ocean wished it could have easily submerged the entire land by just raising its level by a foot or so. But it has never done so; it is so self-controlled that it has not even devoured an inch of sandy banks on its side. Could not the ocean have gnawed at the sands gradually and imperceptibly over million of years and spread its tentacles—or realm—over large tracts of land by its shore? Global warming has melted the glaciers, but they have not raised the level of the ocean nor reduced its water content. The rivers change course, but the ocean never does so. It roars like a lion, but never devours.

The same thing applies to the Avadhut Sanyasi. He is always the same; he neither boils over with pride when praised or by the great mystical powers that he possesses, nor does he get angry at being chided or insulted. He is personified virtues of calmness and poise, equanimity and fortitude, forgiveness and charity, blessedness, piety, divinity and holiness et al combined into one.]

न निरोद्धो न चोत्पत्तिर्न बद्धो न च साधकः । न मुमुक्षुर्न वै मुक्त इत्येषा परमार्थता ॥११॥

na nirodho na cotpattirna baddho na ca sādhaḥ /  
na mumukṣurna vai mukta ityeṣā paramārthatā // 11 //

11. Therefore, the factual position is that there is no such thing as dissolution of the soul and freedom from birth or the fetters and bondages that are deemed to be tying a

creature to this world. An aspirant does not have to follow some special path to achieve an exalted stature and find liberation and deliverance of his soul from worldly shackles and the cycle of birth and death, nor is there any special state which can be designated as being free from any bondage.

In other words, everything depends upon how a man thinks and treats his self, his present circumstances and the world around him that determine whether or not he is liberated and emancipated, whether or not the world has been able to tie him in knots, whether or not he has renounced the world and its illusive charms, whether or not he is really peaceful and happy, and such other noble virtues that characterise the life of a wise, erudite, enlightened and self-realised man.

If only he detaches himself from getting emotionally, mentally and intellectually involved in this world and its illusionary charms, if only he remains distanced internally from the objects of the senses in this world, if only he remains neutral and indifferent to everything extraneous to his pure conscious Atma which is the only truth recognised by wise men, if only he treats everything with stoic calmness, if only he remains unruffled, unperturbed and unmoved by the gravest of provocations from this world, neither hating anything nor getting attached to them, if only he can maintain sincere and profound sense of equanimity, neutrality and fortitude—it is only then can he be said to be truly self-realised, wise, erudite and enlightened. He is deemed to be eternally free and emancipated; he is not under any bondage or shackled to anything. He need not run away from this world and find a separate existence of physical distance from this world, because even if he remains in close proximity to this world but maintains mental distance from it then he is better off than a man who stays far away in a forest but remains mentally attached to the world (11).

ऐहिकामुष्मिकव्रातसिद्धयै मुक्तेश्च सिद्धये । बहुकृत्यं पुरा स्यान्मे तत्सर्वमधुना कृतम् ॥१२॥  
 तदेव कृतकृत्यत्वं प्रतियोगिपुरःसरम् । दुःखिनोऽज्ञाः संसरन्तु कामं पुत्राद्यपेक्षया ॥१३॥  
 परमानन्दपूर्णोऽहं संसरामि किमिच्छया । अनुतिष्ठन्तु कर्माणि परलोकयियासवः ॥१४॥  
 सर्वलोकात्मकः कस्मादनुतिष्ठामि किं कथम् । व्याचक्षतां ते शास्त्राणि वेदानध्यापयन्तु वा ॥१५॥  
 येऽत्राधिकारिणो मे तु नाधिकारोऽक्रियत्वतः । निद्राभिक्षे स्नानशौचे नेच्छामि न करोमि च ॥१६॥  
 द्रष्टारश्चेत्कल्पयन्तु किं मे स्यादन्यकल्पनात् । गुञ्जापुञ्जादि दह्येत नान्यारोपितवह्निना । नान्यारोपितसंसार  
 धर्मानिवमहं भजे ॥१७॥

aihi kām uṣmika vrātasiddhayaḥ / mukteśca siddhaye / bahukṛtyaṃ purā syānme  
 tatsarvam adhunā kṛtam // 12 //

tadeva kṛtakṛtyatvaṃ pratiyogipuraḥsaram / duḥkhino'jñāḥ saṃsarantu  
 kāmāṃ putrādyapekṣayā // 13 //

paramānandapūrṇo'haṃ saṃsarāmi kimicchayā / anutiṣṭhantu karmāṇi  
 paralokayiyāśavaḥ // 14 //

sarvalokātmakaḥ kasmādanutiṣṭhāmi kiṃ katham / vyācakṣatām te śāstrāṇi  
 vedān adhyāpayantu vā // 15 //

ye'trādhikāriṇo me tu nādhikāro'kriyatvataḥ / nidrābhikṣe snānaśauce  
 necchāmi na karomi ca // 16 //



draṣṭāraścetkalpayantu kiṃ me syādanyakalpanāt / guñjāpuñjādi dahyeta  
nānyāropitavahninā / nānyāropitasamsāra dharmānevamaham bhaje // 17 //

12-17. 'In order to fulfil my worldly obligations and ensure at the same time that I get Mukti after death (i.e. I get final liberation and deliverance from this world of transmigration so as not to enter this cycle again), it was necessary and ordained for me to do certain auspicious and righteous deeds. I have fulfilled all my obligations and have done whatever I could do to the best of my ability. But that phase is past now, and I am free'. With this sense of satisfaction and feeling absolutely contented with his life and the deeds that he had done, he becomes calm, quiet and peaceful [12 ½].

Then he begins to ponder further—'Ignorant persons remain trapped in this world by hoping for sons and other worldly acquisitions. [That is, ordinary worldly men desire to have a large family and the need to have sons to carry on the family line and maintain and enhance the assets accumulated by them. People desire to have a son to carry forward their achievements and good name, or complete unfinished tasks, or even to accomplish something which the man had strongly yearned for but could not do himself due to so many constraints.] [13].

But I am fulfilled and overwhelmed with the happiness and joys of having led a fruitful and auspicious life. I have no desires left in me, so why should I allow myself to get unnecessarily trapped in the snares of this world? [13 ½]

Those who desire to go to heaven or aspire to have some auspicious future for themselves after death continue to do auspicious and righteous deeds in the hope that their desires and aspirations for a sound future would be fulfilled [14].

Let them do what they want. But I have realised that I am the Atma which is immanent, imperishable, universal and all-pervading, not only in the present but would also remain the same in the future. I have become universal, uniform and immanent in the sense that my true identity is this Atma, and it is a universal, ubiquitous and quintessential entity in creation. So there is no point in my doing something to ensure a better future for my Atma because it is not affected by any dimension of time and circumstance, and would constantly remain always the same. Therefore obviously, why should I bother about doing any deed (to better my future or enhance my present stature which is already exalted and divine)? [14 ½]

Let those who so wish and have the expertise to read and preach the scriptures do what they are good at—i.e. read and preach the scriptures. But I am not eligible to do so and I remain completely inactive and neutral. [That is, studying and teaching of the scriptures are no longer needed by me as I have already understood their essence and principle teaching by realising the truth about my Atma and the supreme Brahm of which this Atma is an image.] Therefore, I need not study or preach the scriptures [15 ½].

I have no desire or the need for sleep, to beg for food, to bathe or to attend to other daily routine chores of life (because these are needed by the body whereas I am the ethereal Atma or the universal soul, and not the gross body) [16].

Those who think that they are wise and erudite thinkers, well, let them indulge in futile ponderings and imagining things for themselves. I am not concerned with such artificial imaginations [16 ½].

Ignorant people might imagine the presence of a latent fire in the shrub known as Gunja (*Abrus presotorious*) because of its red colour, but their imagination of fire in it would not burn and harm this shrub at all. Likewise, the inner self is immaculate and pure, unaffected by any of the taints and shortcomings associated with the world,

so how can I imagine that I need to worship any divine entity and seek its intercession to either protect myself or clean my inner self? [17]. (12-17).

शृण्वन्त्वज्ञाततत्त्वास्ते जानन्कस्माच्छृणोम्यहम् । मन्यन्तां संशयापन्ना न मन्येऽहमसंशयः ॥१८॥

śṛṇvantvajñātatattvāste jānankasmāñchrṇomyaham /  
manyantāṃ saṃśayā-pannā na manye'hamasaṃśayaḥ // 18 //

18. Those who are not able to know and understand the essential Truth themselves, let them hear about it and get it explained by others. But I, being an exalted Avadhuta, am fully conversant with it myself. So why should I hear about it from others?

Those who have doubts and confusions, let them study and ponder to remove their doubts and confusions. But I do not have any sort of doubts and confusions, and that is the reason why I do not study the scriptures or ponder over their tenets. [This statement is not meant to indicate that the Avadhut Sanyasi is boastful and pretentious, but to highlight the level of his enlightenment and self-confidence. After all, one reads and studies the scriptures for self improvement and realisation of one's spiritual goal, and once this aim is achieved it would be a futile exercise in spending time delving in the vast and endless volumes of the scriptures just to find out something that has already become known. It is highly incredulous and unimaginable that an enlightened man would boast of himself and his knowledge, and treat the scriptures with any kind of disrespect.] (18).

विपर्यस्तो निदिध्यासे किं ध्यानमविपर्यये । देहात्मत्वविपर्यासं न कदाचिद्भजाम्यहम् ॥१९॥

viparyasto nididhyāse kiṃ dhyānamaviparyaye /  
dehātmavaviparyāsaṃ na kadācidbhajāmyaham // 19 //

19. Those who are inclined to forget or get confused about the Truth, those who develop misconception about the Truth, let them remember it again and again to refresh their memory and reinforce their belief, faith and commitment. But where there is no confusion or forgetting, there is no need for repetitively remembering the Truth.

I am not misled to believe that the body is true and it is my truthful identity, so there is no need for me to constantly remind my self that the body is not my 'true self' (and instead of it, it is the pure conscious Atma residing in this gross body as my 'true self') (19).

अहं मनुष्य इत्यादिव्यवहारो विनाप्यमुम् । विपर्यासं चिराभ्यस्तवासनातोऽवकल्पते ॥२०॥

ahaṃ manuṣya ityādivyavahāro vināpyamum /  
viparyāsaṃ cirābhyastavā-sanāto'vakalpate // 20 //

20. ‘I am a human being’—this conception about the Atma is also due to ignorance and forgetting about its eternally ethereal and divine nature. [This is because the human being is mortal and has a lot of worldly faults and limitations associated with the gross body, whereas the Atma is divine, ethereal and eternal, not at all subjected to any taints and limitations that mire the man’s physical existence.]

This misconception about who the truthful ‘self’ is, is also due to prolonged indulgence in worldly passions and desires. [This is because the world can be enjoyed only through the medium of the gross body, and when one becomes habituated to enjoying the sense objects of the world he forgets who he actually is. That is, he forgets that when asked the question ‘who are you?’ the man should answer ‘I am the universally pure conscious Atma which has no attributes’ instead of ‘I am the man with this body having certain characteristics’.] (20).

आरब्धकर्माणि क्षीणे व्यवहारो निवर्तते । कर्मक्षये त्वसौ नैव शाम्येद्ध्यानसहस्रतः ॥२१॥

ārabdhakarmanī kṣīṇe vyavahāro nivartate /  
karmakṣaye tvasau naiva śāmyeddhyanasahasrataḥ // 21 //

21. It is only when the effects of past deeds wear out that this worldly behaviour comes to an end. But as long as the past deeds and their accumulated results continue to exert influence upon the creature (through his mind-intellect complex that controls his thoughts and the functioning of the gross body), he would continue to remain entangled in worldly behaviour. [That is, as long as any man does not distance himself from the body which is actually the entity that does all the deeds, he cannot get rid of allowing himself to be involved in the deeds done by the body, and as long as this situation prevails he is bound to the chain of rewards, bad or good, that these deeds produce. It is only when he disassociates himself from the body and becomes highly neutral towards the deeds done by it that he absolves himself from their consequences. Anyone is punished or rewarded for things done by him or her, and since the wise man has realised that his ‘true self’ is the Atma which is ethereal and pure consciousness, and separate from the body, he is not the one who is doing the deeds now under changed circumstances, and therefore cannot be either punished or rewarded for these deeds.] (21).

विरलत्वं व्यवहृतेरिष्टं चेद्ध्यानमस्तु ते । बाधिकर्मव्यवहृतिं पश्यन्ध्यायाम्यहं कुतः ॥२२॥

viralatvaṃ vyavahr̥teriṣṭaṃ ceddhyanamastu te /  
bādhikarmavyavahr̥tiṃ paśyandhyāyāmyahaṃ kutaḥ // 22 //

22. If you (here referring to Sankriti who is hearing this preaching) have a desire to continue doing deeds and thereby remain entangled in their web, then do as it pleases you. But in my considered view, the doing of deeds have no role to play in one’s spiritual upliftment and the soul’s final liberation and deliverance. So why should I (i.e. the Avadhut Sanyasi) contemplate and ponder on this matter any longer? Why should I think what to do and what not to do? (22).

विक्षेपो नास्ति यस्मान्मे न समाधिस्ततो मम । विक्षेपो वा समाधिर्वा मनसः स्याद्विकारिणः ॥२३॥

vikṣepo nāsti yasmānme na samādhistato mama /  
vikṣepo vā samādhirvā manasaḥ syādvikāriṇaḥ // 23 //

23. My (the Avadhut Sanyasi's) mind and intellect never become restless and agitated, and therefore I need not engage myself in special sessions of Samadhi to tame them. [Samadhi is a trance-like state obtained during the higher stages of meditation when the mind is completely annihilated and controlled, making the spiritual aspirant oblivious of the body and the surrounding world.]

It is only when the mind is eclipsed and tainted by the dark shadow cast by various faults and imperfections associated with this mundane material world characterised by uncountable delusions, and is buffeted by various misconceptions that arise out of ignorance that it becomes darkened and corrupted, unstable and agitated. It is only then that one needs to practice Samadhi to cleanse it of his taints and make it regain its original poise and calmness along with its pristine purity and high level of wisdom. [The word 'Samadhi' here would mean training the mind to be consistent and constantly stable, to become calm and poised and remain non-involved with the sense perceptions of the body. This would calm it down and remove the cause of it getting tainted or deluded by the numerous faults originating in the artificial world of material sense objects. Being free from being constantly nagged at by these perceptions and the charms of the world and the desires of the sense organs for gratification, the mind would have the energy and time left to ponder on nobler things of life, delve into the mysteries and secrets of creation, and contemplate about the great import of the spiritual truths as expounded and enunciated by the scriptures.]

I am experiencing this profound calmness, equilibrium, peace and stability of the mind and intellect on a regular basis; so where is there any special need to sit in meditative postures and engage in Samadhi to achieve this end? Is there anything different from what I am experiencing now that can be obtained or experienced during Samadhi? [So why should I do it? In other words, special sessions of meditation and Samadhi are not needed by me as I have already achieved the spiritual high that is the aim of meditation and Samadhi.] (23).

नित्यानुभवरूपस्य को मेऽत्रानुभवः पृथक् । कृतं कृत्यं प्रापणीयं प्राप्तमित्येव नित्यशः ॥२४॥

व्यवहारो लौकिको वा शास्त्रीयो वाऽन्यथापि वा । ममाकर्तुरलेपस्य यथारब्धं प्रवर्तताम् ॥२५॥

nityānubhavarūpasya ko me'trānubhavaḥ pṛthak /  
kṛtaṁ kṛtyaṁ prāpaṇīyaṁ prāptamityeva nityaśaḥ // 24 //  
vyavahāro laukiko vā śāstriyo vānyathāpi vā / mamākarturalepasya  
yathārabdhaṁ pravartatām // 25 //

24-25. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) have done regularly what I was supposed to do according to the mandate of the various scriptures, and I have also got regularly what I was supposed to get (as a result of my deeds and efforts). Therefore, why should I do anything ordained or prescribed by the scriptures, traditions or any other authority? That is why I do not conform to them, and do nothing.

I do not have any aspirations and desires, nor do I expect anything. So I do not lose sleep over anything; I accept whatever comes my way in the normal course of life and respond normally according to the event (24-25).

अथवा कृतकृत्योऽपि लोकानुग्रहकाम्यया । शास्त्रीयेणैव मार्गेण वर्तेऽहं मम का क्षतिः ॥२६॥

athavā kṛtakṛtye'pi lokānugrahakāmyayā /  
śāstriyeṇaiva mārgena varte'haṁ mama kā kṣatiḥ // 26 //

26. Even if I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) behave and act according to the sanction of the scriptures it is because I wish to set a visible example to be followed by other ordinary people, so what is the harm in my doing so. [In other words, I am not contradicting myself when I act according to the traditional norms of behaviour inspite of my firmly asserting that I am free to do what I wish to do. Though I am at liberty to act strangely and at variance to established norms, but I prefer not to do so because less enlightened people would construe it in the wrong light and cite my example to justify their own pervert and reckless demeanours and conducts; they would act wrongly and then cite my example to justify their misdemeanours though they are no match for the level of spiritual enlightenment and maturity that I have. I do not wish to set a wrong example for this ignorant and deluded world and push it down further in the drain of evil behaviour and pretensions.] (26).

देवार्चनस्नानशौचभिक्षादौ वर्ततां वपुः । तारं जपतु वाक्तद्वत्पठत्वाम्नायमस्तकम् ॥२७॥  
विष्णुं ध्यायतु धीर्यद्वा ब्रह्मानन्दे विलीयताम् । साक्ष्यहं किञ्चिदप्यत्र न कुर्वे नापि कारये ॥२८॥

devārcanasnānaśaucabhikṣādaḥ vartatāṁ vapuḥ /  
tāraṁ japatu vāktadva-tpaṭhatvāmnāyamastakam // 27 //  
viṣṇuṁ dhyāyatu dhīryadvā brahmānande vilīyatām /  
sākṣyaham kiṁcidapyatra na kurve nāpi kāraye // 28 //

27-28. The body might remain engaged in offering formal worship to Gods, praying to them, performing religious rites, cleaning itself by washing and bathing (performing ablution), or in studying and learning the scriptures or other bodies of knowledge, the faculty of speech might remain engaged in repeating the ethereal Mantra called OM and reciting the Upanishads [27], the mind might remain constantly engaged in remembering Lord Vishnu or it might even remain submerged in the thoughts of the supreme Brahman and enjoy the extreme bliss obtained by this remembrance—but I must say that none of these bothers me in the least as I am a mere witness and a neutral observer of all that the body does, without getting involved in any of the activities of the body.

I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) do none of these things nor do I instruct or advise others to do anything of any sort [28]. (27-28).

कृतकृत्यतया तृप्तः प्राप्तप्राप्यतया पुनः । तृप्तत्वेवं स्वमनसा मन्यतेऽसौ निरन्तरम् ॥२९॥

kṛtakṛtyatayā tṛptaḥ prāptaprāpyatayā punaḥ /  
tṛpyannevaṁ svamanasā manyate'sau nirantaram // 29 //

29. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) am fully contented and fulfilled. I have achieved and acquired whatever there was to be achieved and acquired. My mind is firmly convinced of this fact; it is the irrefutable truth (29).

धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं नित्यं स्वात्मानमञ्जसा वेद्मि । धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं ब्रह्मानन्दो विभाति मे स्पष्टम् ॥३०॥

dhanyo'haṁ dhanyo'haṁ nityaṁ svātmānamañjasā vedmi /  
dhanyo'haṁ dhanyo'haṁ brahmānando vibhāti me spaṣṭam // 30 //

30. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because I have come to know, in a natural way (i.e. without any strenuous study of the scriptures and hard practices of Yoga or Tapa—severe forms of meditation and observance of austerity and penance respectively), my inherently and truly eternal, imperishable and infinite form that is the universally pure consciousness known as the Atma.

I am certainly blessed and most fortunate as this realisation (of my 'true self' as being the self-illuminated and pure conscious Atma which is a manifestation of the supreme cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm) provides me with the extreme bliss and ecstasy that comes with Brahm-realisation. It clearly illuminates my inner being with the light of enlightenment and fills me with its accompanying bliss and ecstasy that is nothing but ethereally divine in nature. [In other words, when I have come to know what my true identity is, I feel absolutely exhilarated at this knowledge, and it bestows upon me the blessedness that comes with self-realisation and obtaining the elixir of divinity and eternity. I feel absolutely overjoyed at having the acquaintance of something as astoundingly magnificent, as profoundly grand and as majestically divine as the supreme Brahm. This glorious illumination of realisation removes all traces of darkness arising out of ignorance and delusions that might have lingered on in some corner of my inner being, i.e. in my heart and mind, thereby giving me the much sought-after light of enlightenment. I indeed feel most fortunate and blessed!] (30).

धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं दुःखं सांसारिकं न वीक्षेऽद्य । धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं स्वस्याज्ञानं पलायितं क्वापि ॥३१॥

dhanyo'haṁ dhanyo'haṁ duḥkhaṁ sāṁsārikaṁ na vīkṣe'dya /  
dhanyo'haṁ dhanyo'haṁ svasyājñānaṁ palāyitaṁ kvāpi // 31 //

31. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because I do not see the miseries and sorrows of this mortal and perishable world in the least. [That is, now I do not see death and decay anywhere, I do not see misery and sorrow anywhere as now I am able to see the eternal and

imperishable Brahm everywhere. In other words, my perception of the world had undergone a sea change for the better. Whereas earlier I had seen unhappiness and distress as reigning everywhere and found no happiness and contentedness in anything, now I feel fully contented and blissful with no trace of discomfort and unhappiness of the earlier times. I perceive the world in wonder and awe as a magnificent creation of the supreme craftsman and maverick creator known as Brahm, and marvel at his stupendous abilities, astounding wisdom, expert craftsmanship and creative skills that he has moulded such a vast creation from virtually nothing to start with and in such a way that no two units of it are exactly alike. I look at the positive aspect of the world and see the body as the only chance to break free from the cycle of birth and death, instead of as bondage and a cumbersome burden on my soul. This is because as a human I can study the scriptures and decide for myself about my destiny as compared to my earlier lives where this option and opportunity was not available to me. I have got a golden opportunity not only to find liberation and deliverance for myself but I can also show others who are less fortunate the way for it. I can serve the supreme Lord in his myriad forms as the numerous creatures of this world, and I need not worship him separately to please him.]

I am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because my ignorance and delusions had been completely eliminated for good a long time ago. [That is, although my ‘true self’, the pure conscious Atma, was inherently wise, erudite and enlightened, I was not aware of it, and therefore I had been thinking that I need to acquire knowledge and become wise. But now I have discovered the truth about my eternally wise heritage and the fact that the Atma is never unwise and ignorant. It was only out of delusions and the evil effects of Maya or illusions created about the ‘truth’ that I had felt that I was ignorant and unwise. Now, having acquired the divine insight into the reality, I have woken up to the ‘reality and truth’ of the Atma, and therefore all my misconceptions and misgivings about it are dispelled. I have realised who I truly am.] (31).

धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं कर्तव्यं मे न विद्यते किञ्चित् । धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं प्राप्तव्यं सर्वमत्र संपन्नम् ॥३२॥

dhanyo'ham dhanyo'ham kartavyam me na vidyate kimcit /  
dhanyo'ham dhanyo'ham prāptavyam sarvamatra sampannam // 32 //

32. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because I have nothing more to do as there is nothing left for me to do. I am fulfilled and contented.

I am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because whatever I wished to have or acquire or gain access to has already been done. Nothing remains to be had or acquired or accessed now as it is already with me. I am absolutely contented, satisfied, fulfilled and accomplished (32).

धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं तृप्तेर्मे कोपमा भवेल्लोके । धन्योऽहं धन्योऽहं धन्यो धन्यः पुनः पुनर्धन्यः ॥३३॥

dhanyo'ham dhanyo'ham trpterme kopamā bhavelloke /  
dhanyo'ham dhanyo'ham dhanyo dhanyah punah punardhanyah // 33 //

33. I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) am blessed and most fortunate. Indeed, I am blessed and most fortunate! It is because there is nothing to compare with the degree of contentedness and fulfilment that I enjoy now.

I am indeed blessed and most fortunate. I repeat and assert that I am indeed blessed and most fortunate! (33).

अहो पुण्यमहो पुण्यं फलितं फलितं दृढम् । अस्य पुण्यस्य संपत्तेरहो वयमहो वयम् ॥३४॥

aho puṇyamaho puṇyaṃ phalitaṃ phalitaṃ dr̥ḍham /  
asya puṇyasya saṃpatteraho vayamaho vayam // 34 //

34. Oh Auspiciousness and Righteousness (collectively called ‘Punya’)! [Here, the good virtues of ‘auspiciousness’ and ‘righteousness’ have been personified.] You have borne ripe fruits for me and have fully rewarded me in a perpetual manner for being faithful to you by pursuing the virtues of auspiciousness and righteousness diligently in my life. How fortunate and blessed are we<sup>1</sup>! (34).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Here the use of the plural pronoun ‘we’ instead of the singular ‘I’ indicates that the Avadhut wishes to say that all ascetics who have realised the ‘truth’ as he has done are blessed and fortunate.]

अहो ज्ञानमहो ज्ञानमहो सुखमहो सुखम् । अहो शास्त्रमहो शास्त्रमहो गुरुरहो गुरुः ॥३५॥

aho jñānamaho jñānamaho sukhamaho sukham /  
aho śāstramaho śāstramaho gururaho guruḥ // 35 //

35. Oh Gyan (truthful knowledge of the reality; the virtues of wisdom, erudition, sagacity and enlightenment personified)! Oh Sukha (the divine sense of pleasure and happiness obtained by self and Brahm realisation personified)! Oh Scriptures! [Here, ‘scriptures’ have also been personified.] Oh Guru (moral preceptor, teacher and spiritual guide)! [I thank you all for my eclectic and blessed state of self-realisation and enlightenment. It is because of your grace, blessings and patronage that this has been made possible for me.]’ (35).

इति य इदमधीते सोऽपि कृतकृत्यो भवति । सुरापानात्पूतो भवति । स्वर्णस्तेयात्पूतो भवति ।  
ब्रह्महत्यात्पूतो भवति । कृत्याकृत्यात्पूतो भवति । एवं विदित्वा स्वेच्छाचारपरो भूयादोऽसत्यमित्युपनिषत्  
॥३६॥

॥ इति अवधूतोपनिषत् समाप्ता ॥

iti ya idamadhīte so’pi kṛtakṛtyo bhavati / surāpānātpūto bhavati /  
svaraṇasteyātpūto bhavati / brahmahatyātpūto bhavati / kṛtyākṛtyātpūto  
bhavati / evaṃ veditvā svecchācāraparo bhūyādoṃsatyamityupaniṣat // 36 //



// thus ends Avadhut Upanishad //

36. In this way, a person who studies this Upanishad becomes spiritually accomplished, fulfilled and contented. Even those who are sinful and have committed grave offences like drinking wine and getting intoxicated, stealing gold, killing Brahmins (or for that matter any living being unnecessarily and unprovoked), and generally does things not warranted and not worthy of doing, are forgiven and absolved of their horrendous sins and misdeeds by studying and understanding the tenets and principles of this Upanishad<sup>1</sup>.

In fact, a man becomes holy and pure by merely reciting and regularly reading this scripture. [This is because regular and deep study of this Upanishad would automatically mould the character of the man, inculcate auspicious and noble virtues in him, and generally help him to develop deep insight into what is righteous, auspicious, noble and truthful for his soul, and what is not. He would voluntarily inculcate these virtues in a normal way even without any external prodding or inducements of any kind. Then he can choose the path most suited for him and voluntarily pursue it. After all, this is the end result of study of the scriptures, for what is the use of studying anything if one does not implement its teaching in his practical life and gain from this knowledge. It would be a waste of time, energy and effort if this is not achieved.]

‘OM’ representing the supreme transcendental Brahm is the only Truth—verily, this is the essential teaching of this Upanishad. Amen! (36).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This blanket amnesty should not be construed as a license for being pervert and sinful in the hope of first enjoying the vices and then be pardoned for them. Actually, this edict is meant for sincere persons who had been unwittingly trapped in the quagmire of sins and now wish to atone for their misdeeds at any cost. Their regret is sincere and their desire for repentance is equally sincere. Such persons should be given a chance for redemption, for every man can err, and the wise one is he who wakes up at the earliest and reaches his destination in time. Evidently, such pardon is an opportunity for undoing the wrong, and is given once. It is not that one goes on committing sins and each time read this Upanishad or for that matter any other religious text in the false hope that his earlier sins would be forgiven; nothing is more absurd than this. ‘Reading’ means reading with understanding, and not simply perfunctory and obligatory recitation of the verses in a mechanical way like a parrot. So, when one reads anything with understanding and concentration he would be influenced by what he reads, especially when he is in search for a way out for his moral and spiritual ailments. He would eagerly grasp each tenet of the scriptures and faithfully observe their teachings as the last straw caught hold by a desperate man about to drown in the heaving ocean of miseries and sorrows. Who would like to burn his fingers over and over again if he has felt the pain and agony of getting burnt once and has found a remedy that can not only alleviate his sufferings but restore the damaged organ to its original form?

Likewise, this amnesty is given in the scriptures as a merciful benediction and graceful gesture meant for sincere spiritual aspirants who wish to relent and mend their ways. It helps them to redeem their souls and proves that though the scriptures prescribe strict punishment for sins and misdeeds, they are intrinsically gracious and merciful because they are embodiments of the Supreme Being himself.]

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## (4.2) Katha-Rudra Upanishad:

This Upanishad is also called 'Kanth-rudra Upanishad'. In this Upanishad, the esoteric and enigmatic but most eclectic and divine knowledge pertaining to the transcendental Supreme Being known as Brahm is being discussed. It is one of the eclectic Upanishads which are revealed ones as they were taught by one or the other of the Trinity Gods; in this particular case it is Prajapati Brahma, the great patriarch of creation, when he was approached by the Gods with a request to preach them the great knowledge pertaining to the supreme Divinity known as Brahm. This knowledge is called 'Brahm Vidya' and it is closely related to the knowledge of the Atma, the pure consciousness.

During the unfolding of the teaching, Prajapati elucidates about the life of Sanyas and how to be initiated into it. Sanyas is the eclectic way of life marked by total renunciation and detachment from this world of sense objects and its illusionary charms which not only trap the creature in their strong snare but are perishable and transient at the same time and therefore cannot give eternity and long-term happiness. Any involvement with them keeps the creature permanently trapped in the cycle of birth and death and their accompanying chain of uncountable and indescribable horrors. So if one were to really benefit from acquiring the truthful knowledge of Brahm and the Atma, and consequentially expect liberation and deliverance from the fetters of ignorance and delusions that tie him down to this world as well as hope to find emancipation and salvation for his soul then it is expected from him that he would follow the correct path in order to reach his spiritual destination. And this path is the path of Sanyas marked by profound renunciation obtained as a result of becoming aware of the reality and truth behind the façade of falsehood and deception.

Verse nos. 1-3 describe the due process of accepting the vows of Sanyas, and verse nos. 4-11 enumerate the various codes that are to be strictly observed once one accepts these vows. The verses following elucidate upon the metaphysical concepts pertaining to Brahm and its related matters such as the origin of the basic ingredients that would eventually unfold this world both at the subtle level as well as at the grosser level. In this context, this Upanishad goes on to describe about the supreme Atma (the pure cosmic Consciousness) known as the Pratyagatma or Brahm, and its various forms called the Panch Atmas in relation to the Panch Koshas (the five sheaths that surround the pure conscious self of the creature). The genesis of creation is described in esoteric metaphysical terms, and in this context the various other concepts are also explained, such as the concept of Maya (delusions leading to misconceptions), Agyan (ignorance), Bhuts (primary elements), and the grand and quintessential nature of Brahm who is non-dual and the overriding supreme Authority in the entire creation and central to its existence as the 'consciousness' known as the Atma. It is this Atma representing Brahm that is revealed in the form of the individual living being called the Jiva. It is the only touchstone against which the truthfulness of everything in existence is to be judged.

Since the theme of our present book is 'Sanyas', we shall therefore limit ourselves to verse nos. 1-11 only in this reading to keep the focus. This entire Upanishad has however been published in full along with other Upanishads of the Krishna Yajur Veda in this author's series on 108 Vedic Upanishads that has been published independently by a reputed Indian publisher. This series is in hard-bound

deluxe edition running into five volumes according to the Vedas to which the concerned Upanishad belongs, and the total number of books in these volumes are eighteen. If any reader is interested, he or she can contact the author for details of the publisher from where the series can be had.

## ॥ कठरुद्रोपनिषद् ॥

देवा ह वै भगवन्तमब्रुवन्नधीहि भगवन्ब्रह्मविद्याम् । स प्रजापतिरब्रवीत् ॥१॥

devā ha vai bhagavantamabruvannadhihi bhagavanbrahmavidyām / sa prajāpatirabravīt // 1 //

1. Once upon a time, all the Gods went to Prajapati Brahma (the first creator who had created this visible world and is the oldest and the senior most of the Trinity Gods) and said—‘Oh Lord! Please preach us Brahm Vidya (i.e. the eclectic and enigmatic knowledge of the supreme transcendental Brahm, the divine Being from whom the rest of creation has emerged and in whom it would collapse at the time of its end)’.

Prajapati replied— (1).

सशिखान्केशान्निष्कृष्य विसृज्य यज्ञोपवीतं निष्कृष्य ततः पुत्रं दृष्ट्वा त्वं ब्रह्मा त्वं यज्ञस्त्वं वषट्कारस्त्वमोँकारस्त्वं स्वाहा त्वं स्वधा त्वं धाता त्वं विधाता । अथ पुत्रो वदत्यहं ब्रह्माहं यज्ञोऽहं वषट्कारोऽहमोँकारोऽहं स्वाहाहं स्वधाहं धाताहं विधाताहं त्वष्टाहं प्रतिष्ठास्मीति । तान्येतान्यनुब्रजन्नाश्रुमापातयेत् । यदश्रुमापातयेत्प्रजां विच्छिन्द्यात् । प्रदक्षिणमावृत्त्यैतच्चैतच्चानवेक्षमाणाः प्रत्यायन्ति । स स्वर्ग्यो भवति ॥२॥

saśikhānkeśānniṣkṛṣya visrjya yajñopavītaṁ niṣkṛtya putraṁ drṣṭvā tvaṁ brahmā tvaṁ yajñastvaṁ vaṣaṭkāraṣṭvamomkāraṣṭvaṁ svāhā tvaṁ svadhā tvaṁ dhātā tvaṁ vidhātā tvaṁ / atha putro vadatyahaṁ brahmāhaṁ yajño’haṁ vaṣaṭkāro’hamomkāro’haṁ svāhāhaṁ svadhāhaṁ dhātāhaṁ vidhātāhaṁ tvaṣṭāhaṁ pratiṣṭhāsmīti / tānyetānyanuvrajannā-śrumāpātayet / yadaśrumāpātayetprajāṁ vicchindyāt / pradakṣiṇamāvṛttyaitaccaitaccā-navekṣamāṇāḥ pratyāyanti / sa svargyo bhavati // 2 //

2. [This verse is a very abrupt introduction of the subject. The Gods had asked to be taught about Brahm Vidya, and so ordinarily Brahma should have introduced them to the subject by telling them what it is all about. Instead, he tells them how to become a Sanyasi—i.e. how to renounce the attractions and charms of this material world and the urge to satisfy the desire of the sense organs for self gratification. This was a disguised way of chiding them for their ignorance and sternly warning them that if they really and sincerely wish to acquire this divine eclectic knowledge then they should first purify themselves like a Sanyasi who is wise person who has renounced

all his worldly attractions and has realised the futility of their pursuit; he has realised that the 'truth and reality' is something different than what is visibly seen and taken for granted; and that this path requires exemplary sacrifice and self-control. The Gods unfortunately do not fit the bill inspite of their exalted stature for they have been depicted as being engrossed in enjoying the majesty and grandeur of heaven, of protecting their turf from encroachment from other peers, of deeply involved in carrying out their respective responsibilities of taking care of the world endlessly because they think that they are immortal, as being proud of the mystical powers and authority that they have and the sway that they have in this world, of depending upon humans for their sustenance in the way of offerings made to them during fire sacrifices done by men, of being partisan and favourably biases towards their devotees who worship them and even going to the extent of getting adverse if such worshipping is not done, of expecting praise and honour instead of remaining neutral and humble, and such other negative traits that are not to be expected from someone who is mentally and emotionally ready to acquire the grand knowledge of Brahm. Therefore, Brahma tells them indirectly that if they really wish to know about Brahm, they ought to first inculcate the auspicious virtues possessed by a true Sanyasi by following the correct path led by such men so as to become eligible for this knowledge, and it is only then that they would benefit from it.

It ought to be noted that all the major Gods are regarded as presiding over one or the other sense organs of the body, and therefore they are always engaged in self-gratification as is revealed by these organs. At the macro level they are depicted as powerful Lords who control certain specific aspects or forces of Nature, and hence their grace and benevolence is needed if one were to find peace and happiness. For instance, the Sun God is needed for light, heat and energy as well as for the proper occurrence of seasons and the cycle of day and night. So his benevolence is needed by humans, and therefore people appease the Gods to keep them in good humour.

Besides this, the Gods are deemed to be 'immortal' only in a relative manner as compared to humans, for they have their own life cycle measured in celestial terms. So they would also die or end. But the Atma that is the truthful identity of all that 'lives' is universal and uniform, non-dual and all-pervading, eternal and everlasting. It is the same in the humans and the Gods, so fundamentally there is no difference between them. That is why a 'self-realised' man is regarded as being equivalent to or even more exalted than the Gods who are indulgent, engrossed in enjoying the comforts of heaven and pride of their exalted stature, expecting worship to be made to them and being partisan towards those who do so.

Primarily the aim of these beginning verses dealing with Sanyas is to tell the Gods that if one is sincerely interested in knowing about Brahm, he should prepare himself for it by following certain codes of conduct, both external and internal, much like one has to wear a formal prescribed uniform to school or college and observe certain codes of discipline even if it is to maintain decorum of the hallowed institution of knowledge. These codes of conduct in the realm of spiritualism are called the vows of Sanyas, a life of strict spiritual vows and total devotion for one's spiritual path. This is possible only when one is careful not to fall prey to worldly temptations and avoid its numerous pitfalls. Theoretical knowledge of Brahm can be available in the scriptures but it is no good unless it is implemented in practical life; if freedom is not achieved and emancipation of the soul not obtained, if eternal peace and beatitude is not acquired then what is the use of spending long hours in fruitless study of the Vedas and other scriptures?]

‘The aspirant should shave off the hair on his head along with the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the cranium of Hindus). He should summon his son and say to him—‘Oh Son! You are (a personification of) Brahma (the creator), Yagya (fire sacrifice), Vashatkaar (special fire sacrifices meant to honour specific Gods and are done with specific Mantras or mystical formulae and words especially dedicated to that particular deity), OM (the divine Mantra of Brahm and regarded as the subtle sound manifestation of Brahm), Swaha (the word pronounced at the time of making offerings into the sacred fire and meant for the Gods), Swadha (the word pronounced at the time of making offerings to the dead ancestors), Dhata (progenitor, preserver, sustainer, caretaker and nourisher of creation, an epithet usually applied to the Trinity gods consisting of Brahm, Vishnu and Shiva), and Vidhata (one who determines destiny and lays down the laws for the creation)’<sup>1</sup>.

When the father is finished saying this, the son should accept the teaching of the father by affirming as follows—‘Yes, I am indeed Brahma, Yagya, Vashatkaar, OM, Swaha, Swadha, Dhata, and Vidhata as well as Twasta (Vishnu, Shiva, Prajapati Brahma, Vishwakarma who is the architect of gods, the eleventh Aditya or Sun God) and Pratistha (one who is firmly established in fame and reputation; to stand on one’s own strength and have firmness while standing)’<sup>2</sup>.

When the seeker of Brahm finally embarks on his spiritual journey symbolically represented by taking to the path of Sanyas, he should not shed tears, or lament and in anyway get emotional if the family members such as the son and the wife try to follow him from behind. If he weeps, it would be ruinous for his off springs. [This is because it indicates that he is still attached with his family and has worldly ties. This would be tantamount to being forced to accept the vows of Sanyas against his wills, and such a life is equivalent to a life of slavery because he would never find emotional and mental peace. He would always be longing for his son, family and the comforts of home. Such a man is not eligible and authorized to take the vows of Sanyas. Probably he was frustrated with the family and its burden, or was unhappy with the son and wife that he decided to take to Sanyas, and if this is the case then the curse would fall on them for forcing him out of the house, albeit in the guise of acceptance of Sanyas. So it is more under coercion of circumstances than out of natural free will and natural renunciation and detachment for the artificial world and its material comforts that such a man has become a Sanyasi, and any kind of compulsion is not conducive to spiritual enhancement and achievement of peace. If this is not the case, then the weeping and lamenting indicates that the family members are not allowing him to take to Sanyas and he is going against their wishes. He probably has a young son who is not ready or mature enough to accept the family’s burden. In such a case it would be sinful act to fail to carry out one’s responsibilities and make others suffer for one’s own gain for that would be a selfish action. Such Sanyasis cannot hope to find peace and liberation for which they have taken to the path of Sanyas in the first place. Further, weeping family members and the aspirant show that they are emotionally and sentimentally attached to each other, and therefore the family would make efforts to maintain contact with him and tag him along one way or the other. This would kill the very purpose of taking to Sanyas, for the person would be naturally affected when the family visits him and narrates its own litany of woes and problems. Sanyas envisages complete breaking off all tethers pertaining to this world and earlier life, and assuming a new personality with complete acceptance of a new life of Sanyas where the only entity that matters is Brahm and the Atma. This tenet would be violated if the links with the family are maintained.]

On the contrary, if his kith and kin go around him (i.e. circumambulate him) respectfully and return to their household without any sense or sign of grief or regret, the aspirant becomes eligible to have an access to the abode of Gods in the heaven<sup>3</sup> (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 11, 15 of Rig Veda tradition. The procedure outlined here is followed by a householder who enters the life of Vaanprastha which precedes Sanyas and is closely related to it. Vaanprastha is the initial stage and the first step towards a full-fledged life as a Sanasi. The word literally means 'heading for the forest', but it is not to be taken in its too literal meaning in its practical application as is evident from verse no. 3 below which asserts that if going to the forest is not practically feasible, then he can live in a hermitage. So the idea is to renounce the attachment with the world symbolised by cutting off one's ties with the family.

During this transition, the experienced and wise father wishes to tell his son the fundamental essence and truth of what he has learned from life, and this he does by telling him that he is none but Brahm and its divine various virtues personified. The son is enlightened by the father as a parting gift and blessing before he moves out of the house by means of the eclectic statements narrated above in this verse. It is to inculcate self-confidence in the son and warn him to be careful not to let the family name and the father down by doing anything that is unholy and demeaning to his exalted stature. He must obey his father. Indeed, the best gift that a loving father can give his son is not worldly riches which are nevertheless perishable and transient but a secret code that would unlock the eternal treasury of happiness and auspiciousness for him and his progeny.

<sup>2</sup>The son accepts his father's advise by accepting to uphold the family's noble tradition and carry it forward to the best of his ability. By accepting that he is Brahma he agrees that he would act like the family's head now onwards and treat everyone compassionately and with great equanimity like the great patriarch of creation. He would also inculcate wisdom and follow the noble path of righteousness and auspiciousness according to his exalted position as the head of the family like Brahma is for the rest of the creation. He would set an example for others in his family to follow.

Similarly, by accepting the word Yagya, Vashatkar and Swaha he assures his father that he would continue to do fire sacrifices and other religious duties along with offering oblations to the Gods as had been done by him. By accepting the words Swadha he assures him that he would continue to offer libations and respects to the spirit of his dead ancestors. By accepting the Mantra OM he indicates that he would do Japa and perform other religious sacraments and duties in the noblest of family's tradition while using this Mantra as a medium. It also means that he would not be misled by so many doctrines and philosophies offering numerous Mantras, but stick to this divine Mantra which relates directly to the supreme Brahm. By accepting the words Dhata and Vidhata he agrees to willingly take care of his dependants and others in the extended family, and be judicious in his dealings and judgments. By accepting to be Twasta he undertakes to play the role of the Trinity Gods as well as the celestial architect Vishwakarma to create, sustain and develop the family in a well-planned and systematic manner. By accepting the word Pratistha he assures his father that he would do everything to ensure that his and the family's dignity, respect and stature in the society are upheld and enhanced; he would never do anything to undermine what his father had so assiduously and laboriously built and cultivated over a long time.

The utterances of the father and the reply of the son are symbolic of the fact that the wise father is indirectly telling his son that the latter is not an ordinary man but an exalted being like the Trinity Gods, and the mantle of taking care of the world is now falling upon him and so he ought to be exceedingly careful and diligent. He wishes to

tell him that now that he, the father, has decided to move out of the house, the son is expected to take up this responsibility not only of the household but of the rich legacy of wisdom and erudition, of righteousness and auspiciousness that his family is so famed for by being careful in all his deeds and actions, in all his thoughts and behaviours, and ensure that they are up to the bench-mark set by the scriptures and other senior members of this own family in the past; he must ensure that they are according to the laws laid down in the scriptures and never violate them under any provocation or temptation. The son is expected to guard against falling prey to temptations and mind his own self, keeping in mind always the promise that he is making to his father at the time of the latter's final departure from the house—that he is indeed an exalted soul as exemplified by the fact that he has accepted being a personification of great Gods, holy sacraments such as offerings made to the sacred fire, divine Mantras etc. It also ordains the son to keep the family tradition of observing religious sacraments and doing religious duties that were earlier being done by his father going on as usual by performing fire sacrifices, offering oblations and libations to Gods and dead ancestors, repeat Mantras and generally lead a holy and pious life conducive to spiritual upliftment of the soul so that when the right time comes the son would also follow the footsteps of his father by passing the baton to the next generation and taking the vows of Sanyas himself.

The father inspires the son to lead an honourable and dignified life marked by righteousness and auspiciousness as well as an exemplary religious life in consonant with the tenets of the scriptures. The son is expected to carry forward the noble tradition established by his forefathers and which is being handed down to him by his own father now. The assertions mentioned in this verse build confidence in him about himself and his noble lineage.

<sup>3</sup>This is ordained to create an auspicious atmosphere of cheerfulness and happiness, because this is not the time to grieve, weep and lament but to celebrate as the man is attaining some stature which is higher than the mundane, he is progressing to a higher level of life and gaining success in the much sought-after field of spiritual elevation and getting ready for his spiritual liberation and deliverance instead of falling down from a high exalted stature and getting trapped in the endless cycle of miseries and pains, so there is no ground for regrets and causes for lamentations. He is doing the scripturally sanctioned and traditionally most honourable and auspicious deed by taking to the vows of Sanyas towards the fag end of life. In fact, it is time to rejoice and celebrate that at least one soul in the family has stepped on the much-acclaimed correct and auspicious path of enlightenment and Brahm-realisation, and the good effects of this man's actions would bring good fortune on the entire clan and family. Such a man lends his family great respect and privilege in the society and therefore no untoward events must be allowed to happen that would mar this solemn and august moment. Weeping and lamentations only go to destroy the solemnity and grace of the auspicious moment, and are not at all suitable for it.]

ब्रह्मचारी वेदमधीत्य वेदोक्ताचरितब्रह्मचर्यो दारानाहत्य पुत्रानुत्पाद्य ताननुरूपो पाधिभिर्वितत्येष्ट्वा च शक्तितो यज्ञैस्तस्य संन्यासो गुरुभिरनुज्ञातस्य बान्धवैश्च । सोऽरण्यं परेत्य द्वादशरात्रं पयसाग्निहोत्रं जुहुयात् । द्वादशरात्रं पयोभक्षः स्यात् । द्वादशरात्रस्यान्ते—ऽग्नये वैश्वानराय प्रजापतये च प्राजापत्यं चरुं वैष्णवं त्रिकपालमग्निम् । संस्थितानि पूर्वाणि दारुपात्राण्यग्नौ जुहुयात् । मृण्मयान्यप्सु जुहुयात् । तैजसानि गुरवे दद्यात् । मा त्वं मामपहाय परागाः । नाहं त्वामपहाय परागामिति । गार्हपत्यदक्षिणाग्न्याहवनीयेष्वरणिदेशाद्भस्ममुष्टिं पिबेदित्येके । सशिखान्केशान्निष्कृष्य विसृज्य यज्ञोपवीतं भूः स्वाहेत्यप्सु जुहुयात् । अत ऊर्ध्वमनशनमपां प्रवेशमग्निप्रवेशनं वीराध्वानं महाप्रस्थानं वृद्धाश्रमं वा

गच्छेत् । पयसा यं प्राश्नीयात्सोऽस्य सायंहोमः । यत्प्रातः सोऽयं प्रातः । यदर्शे तदर्शम् ।  
यत्पौर्णमास्ये तत्पौर्णमास्यम् । यद्वसन्ते केशश्मश्रुलोमनखानि वापयेत्सोऽस्याग्निष्टोमः ॥३॥

brahmacārī vedamadhītya vedoktācaritabrahmacaryo dārānāhṛtya putrā-  
nutpādyā tānanurūpo pādhibhirvitatyestvā ca śaktito yajñaitasya samnyāso  
gurubhiranujñātasya bāndhavaiśca / so'raṇyaṃ paretya dvādaśarātraṃ  
payasāgnihotraṃ juhuyāt / dvādaśarātraṃ payobhakṣaḥ syāt / dvādaśarā-  
trasyānte'gnaye vaiśvānarāya prajāpataye ca prajāpatyaṃ caruṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ  
trikapālamagniṃ samsthitāni pūrvāṇi dārupātrāṇyāgnau juhuyāt /  
mr̥ṇmayānyapsu juhuyāt / taijasāni gurave dadyāt / mā tvam māmapahāya  
parāgāḥ / nāhaṃ tvāmapahāya parāgāmiti / gārhapatyadakṣiṇāgnyāhava-  
nīyeṣvaraṇideśādbhasmamusṭiṃ pibedityeke / saśikhānkeśānniṣṭṛtya viśjya  
yajñopaviṭaṃ bhūḥsvāhetyapsu juhuyāt / ata ūrdhvamanaśanamapāṃ  
praveśamagnipraveśanaṃ vīrādhvānaṃ mahāprasthānaṃ vṛddhāśramaṃ vā  
gacchet / payasā yaṃ prāśnīyātso'sya sāyaṃhomaḥ / yatprātaḥ so'yaṃ  
prātaḥ / yaddarśe taddarśam / yatpaurṇamāsyē tatpaurṇamāsyam /  
yadvasante keśāśmaśrulomanakhāni vāpayetso'syāgniṣṭomaḥ // 3 //

3. A person should follow the sanctified way of leading life which has been divided into four segments by ancient tradition and scriptures.

In the beginning he should lead a life of Brahmacharya as prescribed in the Vedas and Shastras (i.e. a celibate life of self control and discipline as sanctioned by the scriptures when he spends his time in studies and inculcates values and skills that prepare him to face the rough and tumble of life as an adult with confidence, and which enables him to stand on his own two feet and generally not only to fend for himself but also to take care of his dependants).

Then he should enter the next phase of life of a Grihastha when he marries and produces children to carry forward the lineage of the family. It is expected of him that he would inculcate noble values and virtues in his off spring in accordance to the sanction of the scriptures. During this phase, he performs religious duties such as doing fire sacrifices, observing sacraments and doing other auspicious deeds.

Then he can take the vows of Sanyas (i.e. a life of renunciation and withdrawal from active participation in mundane worldly affairs, and instead spending time in meditation and contemplation and generally preparing oneself for the final exit from the world) by seeking voluntary permission from his kith and kin (who are expected not to deny him this privilege).

Having entered this phase of life as a Sanyasi (one who has taken the stern vows of Sanyas), he should proceed to a secluded place such as a forest. There he should do fire sacrifice for twelve nights (i.e. twelve consecutive days) by offering milk to the sacred fire as oblation and survive on milk during this period of twelve nights or days.

After this period, he should offer the sweetened pudding prepared over the fire in three mud pots and kept aside for the Trinity Gods, i.e. Lord Prajapati Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Trinetra (or the one who holds a trident, i.e. Shiva) to the sacred fire meant to be accepted by the universal Fire God known as Vaishwanar. [That is, now onwards the Sanyasi recognises these three Gods in the form of the eternal and universal fire element that is present everywhere in a latent form and ready to leap into life when required. This fire element is the metaphor for the stupendous energy, dynamism and potentials of the supreme Brahm because without



dynamism, activity and heat in the form of warmth no life is ever possible in this world. In fact, the Sanyasi now worships the Trinity Gods in the form of this Fire called Vaishwanar.]

He should now offer to the sacred fire his wooden pots that were earlier being used by him for various functions during the course of doing fire sacrifices in his previous life as householder. [That is, at the time of taking Sanyas, he should put the wooden pots in the pit of the fire finally lit to bear witness to his taking to the life of Sanyas. This is the last time he is lighting this fire as he is no longer required to do the external form of the fire sacrifice as ordained in this verse below. Henceforth, he is expected to perform an internal form of fire sacrifice.]

Similarly, the pots made of earth are offered to (submerged in) any body of water such as a river or a pond, and those made of metals and other elements (such as gold, brass or copper) are donated to his Guru (who is his moral preceptor and teacher).

At the time of making this gift to the Guru, he should say as follows—‘You should not go far from me, while I would also stay close to you’. [This is to ensure that the teacher and disciple stay in close proximity with each other, a necessity for the disciple because he would need the guidance of the teacher every step of the way in his spiritual path in which he is still a novice. There is another interpretation of this statement. The Guru had enlightened the aspirant about the spiritual Truths and the futility of pursuing this artificial world, he had taught him what the scriptures say and what the correct path to be followed is if he wished to find liberation and deliverance from the cycle of birth and death and its attendant problems. The Guru has unraveled to him the great secrets of metaphysics and spiritualism which had inspired the man to take this path of Sanyas in the first place. So he owes his new-found freedom from the fetters that shackle non-initiated persons to this world only due to this Guru. It was the Guru who had wisened him to the facts relating to his ‘true self’, i.e. the Atma, and the fact that this Atma is the same in the teacher as it is in the disciple. So, this statement ‘we shall be close to each other’ is an affirmation of this teaching. The aspirant wishes to tell the Guru that they would always be close to each other because the Atma which is the same in the Guru as well as in the aspirant is an eternally ethereal spirit that is inherently omnipresent and all-pervading. Wherever the aspirant wishes, the Guru would be there to help him and guide him. Physically going away from the house and village would not be a limiting factor if their Atmas wish to have a communion. Besides this factor, he wishes to indicate to the learned Guru that though he has broken off all ties with the family and the rest of the world, he would ever be obliged to him for showing him the correct path and help him overcome his initial reluctance and misgivings about the life of Sanyas; he would never forget the Guru. He also acknowledges the fact that contact with the Guru is not the same as contact with the rest of the family and the world—for the former is prohibited for a Sanyasi in the scriptures as it creates emotional fetters while contact with an enlightened and wise Guru is always welcome as he would only serve to speed up the aspirant’s progress instead of creating obstacles.]

Some scriptures prescribe that the Sanyasi should pick up a fistful of ash that is lying near the Arani, the wooden drill used to light a sacrificial fire, from the three types of holy fires, viz. Garhyapatya, Dakshinaagni and Aahavaniya<sup>1</sup> that he had performed as a householder earlier, and gulp it down (in a symbolic gesture to indicate that all these divine fires would henceforth reside in his inner self, and therefore he no longer need to worship them externally).

Then he should cut off his Shikha (the tuft of hair on his head on the cranium) and hairs, take off his sacred thread and saying the divine Mantra 'OM Bhu Swaha', he should offer them to the water body which is near at hand. [The meaning of this Mantra is 'OM salutations! I am offering these entities to the Earth'.]

After that he should tread fearlessly upon the auspicious and noble path shown by other great men who had braved hunger by fasting, and who had overcome the fear of water by entering water bodies such as rivers and lakes etc. (to take bath, for example) as well as the fear of fire (by desisting from doing the formal fire sacrifices in order to appease the Fire God and keep the latter in good humour as well as symbolically establishing these sacred fires inside his own self as narrated above in this verse). [In other words, a Sanyasi should learn to overcome the temptations induced by hunger; this ensures that he does not eat non-eatable food and indulges in eating. This self-control helps him to maintain optimum health because he cannot afford the luxury of falling sick and becoming fat and lethargic by overeating. This also helps him to maintain his self-respect and the dignity of his exalted stature because food is the great factor which leads to a man's fall; he would go to any lengths to satisfy his hunger and the urges of his taste buds. Overcoming the fear of water is essential because now he does not have the luxury of a bathroom or ready water to drink; he would have to enter a water-body such as a river or lake to fetch water for his daily needs. Further, he needs to harden himself against the vagaries of nature such as the damp rainy seasons when he might not have any shelter. Overcoming the fear of fire prepares him to bear the heat and scorch of the sun and the hot seasons besides the need to cook food which he might get as alms during his begging sojourns. He might have to light a fire while in the forest to ward off wild animals also. In short, these directions are intended to prepare him for the rough and harsh life ahead. He cannot afford the luxury of a pampered life he was accustomed while he was a householder.]

He should make the great exit as a Sanyasi either by become a wandering mendicant who never stays in one place, or if that is not practicably feasible or advisable then he should proceed to take an abode in the hermitage of an aged Sanyasi. [This option is intended for those whose health or age or other limitations such as physical deformities etc. do not permit wandering. It also proves that the vows of Sanyas are not intended to unduly punish and torment the person, for then they would be against the very reason why a man takes to Sanyas, i.e. to find peace and freedom from the worries of the world so that he can spend quality time to meditate and contemplate upon the great Truths pronounced by the scriptures, and attain the final liberation and deliverance for his soul as propounded by them. If he is subjected to untold miseries and agonies which are beyond his tolerance limits, he might begin to have second thoughts and would be tempted to fall back to his earlier ways of a householder life. Making life too unbearable for him would defeat the very purpose for which a life of sufferance and hardship is intended—which is to make him do Tapa or observe austerity and perform penances so as to atone for his past misdeeds and sins, and purify his soul so that it is ready to enter the life of exemplary purity, piety and holiness. Tapa is like putting gold in fire to remove all the impurities in it and cleanse it. A Sanyasi is expected to be free from all sorts of worldly taints and blemishes, and the hard life is intended for his purpose. But at the same time he should be at peace with himself because only a man who is himself calm and peaceful can effuse these divine for others to benefit from. An unhappy man or one who is tormented by physical discomfort would not be able to concentrate his mind and attention on meditation and contemplation which a Sanyasi is expected to do full time.

He would be more pre-occupied with his physical bodily problems and discomfort to find time for nobler pursuits of the spirit. That is why even in Yoga it is prescribed that if one is not able to follow the rigid Aasans (sitting postures) normally prescribed for meditation, he is allowed to sit in the posture which is comfortable for him, and it is called the 'Sukha Aasan', the sitting posture in which he finds comfort.]

Whatever he eats with milk and water is like his evening fire sacrifice. Similarly, whatever he eats as breakfast is like the doing of the morning fire sacrifice as far as he is concerned. The food that he eats on the dark moon night is his Darsha Yagya (the fire sacrifice done in the day following the night when the first moon is sighted; the word 'Darsha' means to 'see'), and the food that he eats on the full moon night is his Purna-masi Yagya (the fire sacrifice done on the full moon day). [This is because he has symbolically established the sacred fires inside his own self as described earlier in this verse. There is a Upanishad called the Pran Agnihotra Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition which elaborately describes this internal fire sacrifice and asserts that this is the best form of doing it. From the practical view point also this is the best way to do a fire sacrifice for a Sanyasi because once he leaves the house he is ordained to remain alone and carry nothing with him as his possession, so it becomes almost impossible for him to gather the necessary items for performing a fire sacrifice and observing the formal rituals associated with it on a daily basis. His age is catching up with him, he becomes weak physically, and he might not find the right location and environment during his wanderings for such formalities as doing a fire sacrifice.]

The shaving of the hair, beard and mustache as well as trimming of the nails that he gets done in the spring season is like the Agnishtom Yaga (a fire sacrifice when oblations are given to the sacred fire)<sup>2</sup> (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The sacred fires have been described in a number of Upanishads of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition such as the Pran Agnihotra Upanishad, verse nos. 18-19; the Garbha Upanishad, in its paragraph no. 5, and Kathvalli or Katho-panishad, Canto 1, Valli 1, verse no. 13-18 as Agni Vidya.

The three main sacred fires according to the Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 4, sections 10 to 13 are the following—

The Garhyapatya fire—[Refer Chandogya Upanishad, 2/24/3-6, 4/11/1-2, 4/17/4.] This is the householder's fire. A householder has land and farm representing 'earth' in which he grows food. This food is grown with the help of the light of the Sun, and it is cooked in the fire of the fire-place in the house. Hence, the Garhyapatya fire, or the householder's fire, is intrinsically present and is implied in these 4 entities. It is an integral part of these four. The earth has the 'fire element' because without heat and warmth, no seed would germinate and no life can survive on this earth. The food has fire present inherently in it because it is the energy inherent in food which helps to energise the creature that eats it. The presence of heat in the sun does not need to be explained because it is very evident.

The fire was the central piece of all religious life in early times of the Vedic period when a fire sacrifice was deemed to be the best religious activity that a righteous man can expect to do. In this context, the Garhyapatya fire is the main fire lit during such formal fire sacrifices. The fire pit was either square-shaped or rounded. In the context of the fire sacrifice, it is was used for the purpose of daily rituals, cooking or warming the offerings, heating of the vessels, to perform circumambulation, to act as a main cauldron or reservoir of the sacred fire which was to be kept perpetually burning throughout the life of the householder once it was lit.

The Dakshinagni fire—[Refer Chandogya Upanishad, 2/24/7-10, 4/13/1-2, 4/17/5.] This holy fire is a witness to making of charities when some water is poured as libation to the Gods. It signifies that the Gods are offered water to drink. To give

water to the thirsty is the greatest for of charity. Therefore, this fire is symbolically present in water, and when it is poured, it signifies that the heat produced by sins committed by the person has been doused. Charities and donations make a man famous and renowned, hence the allusion to directions of the earth. His glory shines like the bright moon and he is called a star among human beings. He is the most exalted amongst his peers and compatriots even as the moon is most prominent amongst the stars in the sky.

Like in the case of the Garhyapatya fire, the fire that was lit in the main sacrificial shed or site just near the main fire pit but to the south of it and where donations and charities were made was called Dakshinagni fire. The fire pit for this fire was semi-circular or bow-shaped.

The Ahawaniya fire—[Refer Chandogya Upanishad, 2/24/11-16, 4/14/1-2, 4/17/6.] The Ahawaniya fire is lit during the fire sacrifices to respectfully invoke Gods, and invite them to come and participate in the sacrifice and accept offerings made to them. The word 'Aavaahan' in Sanskrit means to invite, invoke, to pray respectfully with the intention of welcoming. Since one uses one's mouth for these purposes, the fire in the form of the strength, energy and vigour of the spoken word and the power of speech residing in the mouth is called Ahawaniya fire. This fire was lit to invoke the Gods, and the Gods live in the heaven; hence the reference to the sky, heavens and electric. Since Pran is the best form of the vital winds, the allusion means that the Gods are the most exalted forms that exist in creation. The 'electric' is a metaphor for immense strength, potent and power, which of course the fire possesses. This inherent quality of Electric that it possess most stupendous powers and strength is likened to the presence of Brahm in it even as the great power and strength present in a man is due to the Atma or Pran present in him. Even as a man is useless without the presence of Pran in him, the Electric would lose its importance if there was no Brahm present in it which gives it its punch and strength.

The Garbha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its paragraph no. 5 describes the location of the three main fires as follows—the 'Ahavaniya' fire resides in the mouth, the 'Garhyapatya' fire lives in the abdomen, and the 'Dakshinagni' has its abode in the heart.

In ancient times it was an established belief and tradition that the way to attain heaven was through the path of the fire sacrifice. The fire sacrifice was in effect a method to harness the spiritual energy inherent in the all pervading fire element which would sufficiently empower the person performing the fire sacrifice to achieve his goal. The sacrificial pit and the heat generated from it reminds one of the modern day nuclear reactors. Even as the strength and energy and powers of the atom can be harnessed for beneficial or ruinous effects through the nuclear reactor, depending upon the temperament and mental setup of the person who masters the science of atomic energy, the fire sacrifice could be similarly used either for auspicious purposes such as attaining eternal peace and tranquillity for the tormented soul, or for attaining worldly glory and conquest. Harnessing of nuclear energy requires expertise, knowledge and skills not easy to master and not accessible to all. Building and operating a nuclear facility also is a daunting and elaborate job. Similarly, the ancient fire sacrifices required special skills and expertise, and it was not simply lighting any odd evening village community bonfire to the merriment of all those who sit around it to gossip about the day's events.

From this perspective of doing a fire sacrifice in order to attain spiritual eternity and liberation, the 'units' of the special knowledge that Yam described to Nachiketa in verse no. 15 of Kathvalli Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition probably pertain to the steps to be followed in the construction of the fire pit—such as the type of bricks used, the number of bricks to be used, the geometrical design of the sacrificial pit, the type of wood to be used in the ceremony, the Mantras to be chanted, and other such finer details which must be diligently and strictly followed if any spiritual benefit is to be derived from the entire exercise. So, the sacrificial fire

pit is like an oven in which the fuel of wood is added and the science of Mantras is used to order to generate immense energy that can empower the patron performing the fire sacrifice with stupendous potentials.

On the other hand, from the metaphysical perspective of harnessing the stupendous energy latent in the eternally burning fire element, Yam must have explained to Nachiketa the different forms of 'fire' as a manifestation of the supreme transcendental Brahm's astounding energy, potentials, powers and strength. The visible symbol of the eternal fire is the sun in the sky and the energy inherently present in the body of all living beings. It is a well known fact that no life can ever exist without heat and energy of the fire element. In Chandogya Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition (Canto 4, Sub-cantos 5 and 7) it has been stated that Brahm is characterised by light and illumination (as opposed to darkness) which are the characteristic virtues of the fire element. The entire Canto 3 is dedicated to the praise of the Sun God as the essence of life, and Sun is the celestial pitcher of fire element which burns eternally inside it.

The 'fire' has immense importance in metaphysics and it is a symbol of life and consciousness. Without 'fire' everything is deemed to be dead and gone.

According to some texts, the fire element has the following three legendary forms—viz. the 'Agni', which is the terrestrial fire on earth represented by the word Bhu, the 'Jatvedas', which is the fire of the sky represented by the word Bhuvaha, and 'Vaishwanar', which is the fire of the heavens represented by the word Swaha (Brihaddevatakaar, 1/67). The term appears in the Rig Veda approx. sixty times and is more often than not synonymous with both life as well as the fire element.

The Jatveda fire has been explained by Yam, the death God, to Nachiketa in Kathavalli or Katho-panishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 2, Valli 1, verse no. 8. It represents the Sun God. The same Upanishad, in its Canto 1, Valli 1, verse no. 7 describes the Vaishwanar Agni, i.e. the universal Fire represented by the Fire God.

The Garbha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its paragraph no. 5 describes the following three types of fires—Gyanagni, Darshanagni and Jatharaagni.

The Brahm Vidya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 69-69 ½ describe that the fire element is inherently present in the three letters of the divine Mantra OM and three locations in the body of the spiritual aspirant. This assumes great significance in the context of Sanyas for now the aspirant is expected to simply repeat the Mantra OM and he is deemed to be doing the fire sacrifice.

<sup>2</sup>It would be noted that a Sanyasi is expected to get over the rituals of formalities and instead become informal in his approach to a pious life. Remaining bogged down in rituals and formal religious activities would not give him the liberty and time to pursue the things of natural interest to him even in this late phase of life. He is given the freedom to do what he wishes to do in the twilight days of life after having spent a lifetime burdened by so many dos and don'ts. He can now pursue subjects close to his heart. Of course it does not mean that he is given the liberty to become sinful and reckless now or live out his wild fantasies that he just could not afford to indulge in earlier; not at all. Obviously, he will not do this as he has already abandoned all attachments with the material world and death is staring him in his face.]

संन्यस्याग्निं न पुनरावर्तयेन्मृत्युरजयमावहमित्यध्यात्ममन्त्राञ्जपेत् । स्वस्ति सर्वजीवेभ्य  
इत्युक्त्वाऽऽत्मानमनन्यं ध्यायन् तदूर्ध्वबाहुर्विमुक्तमार्गो भवेत् । अनिकेतश्चरेत् । भिक्षाशी यत्किञ्चिन्नाद्यात्  
। लवैकं न धावयेज्जन्तुसंरक्षणार्थं वर्षवर्जमिति । तदपि श्लोका भवन्ति ॥४॥

saṁnyasyāgñim na punarāvartayenmṛtyurjayamāvahamityadhyātma-  
mantrāñjapet / svasti sarvajīvebhya ityuktvātmānamananyam dhyāyan  
tadūrdhvbāhurvimuktamārgo bhavet / aniketaścaret / bhikṣāśi yatkiṁcinnā-

dyāt / lavaikaṃ na dhāvayejjantusaṃrakṣaṇārthaṃ varṣavarjamiti / tadapi ślokā bhavanti // 4 //

4. Once a spiritual aspirant takes the vows of Sanyas, he should not establish the sacred fire for the purpose of any religious rite. [Refer verse no. 3 where it is explicitly stated that he establishes these fires inside himself in a symbolic manner by gulping down the ash of the sacrificial pit.]

He should do Japa (repetition) of the eclectic Mantras pertaining to the exalted state of self-realisation, such as the Mantra ‘Mritunjaya-maawaham’ (i.e. ‘I have conquered death’).

‘Let all be blessed with auspiciousness and grace’—thinking in these noble terms he should spend all his time in contemplating upon his Atma, the pure consciousness that is the essence and truth of his existence. [That is, he wishes good of all and has no animosity and ill-will with anyone. Instead of worrying about overcoming his enemies and settling scores with them, he prays for the welfare and good of all living beings. This ensures that he can roam around fearlessly even amongst his earlier opponents, and get due respect in the society. In the fag end of his life when he has embarked on the path of God, it is but natural of him to think and behave in this way.]

He should roam around like a liberated man who exults in his prized and much awaited freedom, and expresses his rejoice by raising his hands skywards<sup>1</sup> as he walks on the auspicious path of spiritual liberation and deliverance, a path free from all worldly delusions, deceits and misconceptions, a path free from all agonies and worries, a path that has no shackles that can ever bind him to this life of birth and death again, and which would finally lead him to emancipation and salvation.

He has no permanent dwelling or address (because now the entire world is his abode as he is now free to live wherever he wants under the vast canopy of the sky as his roof).

He should accept nothing else except food obtained by begging. He should be constantly on the move, not staying at one place for any length of time. But to avoid even inadvertent killing of innocent creatures (such as worm and insects) that mushroom during the rainy season, he should stop his wanderings during this period.

There are certain Shlokas (verses of the scriptures) in the context of the way of life that is expected to be lived by a Sanyasi (and they are cited in the following verses) (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The raising of the hands upwards have other connotations as well—it implies that he has nothing secret to hide and is as open as the vast open sky. It also means that now he has surrendered himself to the supreme Lord and the latter is his only sustainer, protector and bearer; he relies upon the Lord. Therefore he has nothing to fear from anything or anyone in this world.]

कुण्डिकां चमसं शिष्यं त्रिविष्टपमुपानहौ । शीतोपघातिनीं कन्थां कौपीनाच्छादनं तथा ॥५॥  
पवित्रं स्नानशाटीं च उत्तरासङ्गमेव च । यज्ञोपवीतं वेदांश्च सर्वं तद्वर्जयेद्यतिः ॥६॥

kuṇḍikāṃ camasaṃ śikyaṃ triviṣṭampupānahau /  
śītopaghātinīm kanthāṃ kaupīnācchādanam tathā // 5 //  
pavitraṃ snānaśāṭīm ca uttarāsaṅgameva ca /  
yajñopavītaṃ vedāṃśca sarvaṃ tadvarjayedyaṭiḥ // 6 //

5-6. A true Sanyasi is expected to discard all possessions and all external signs of his religious leanings such as the Kundika (a small earthen pot usually carried by mendicants), Chamas (a spoon-like long-handled ladle used to make offerings to the fire sacrifice), Shikya (the latticed sling-bag), the tripod (made of sticks tied at one end and used for holding his personal belongings while he attends to nature's call and his daily ablutions besides being of use during formal fire sacrifices and other rites to hold sacrificial material), foot wears, Kantha (a coarse bedding made of old tattered pieces of cloth sewn together), Kopin and its covering cloth (the loin-cloth and the long seamless piece of cloth worn around the waist that covers the lower part of the body) [5], the Pavitri (the brush made of Kush grass and used to sprinkle water as a purification rite), the clothes used to cover the body after a bath while the old clothes are spread out to dry, the clothes used to cover the upper part of the body (such as a shawl or an overcoat or gown or apron or something to wrap the upper part of the body), and the sacred thread called Yagyopavit (worn across the chest by Hindus).

Besides the above, he is also expected to stop spending his time in studying the Vedas. [A bit of precaution is needed here as this dictum is fraught with the danger of misinterpretation. It does not imply any kind of insult to or insinuation of the Vedas but just stresses the point that it is expected of him now that he begins to implement what he has learnt from the scriptures throughout his life. He has reached a mature age with death staring on his face and therefore he does not have much time left to delve into thick books. He should rather utilise this precious little time that he has left before death overtakes him in meditating and witnessing the bliss derived by contemplation upon his Atma, and remain carefree for the remaining part of his life instead of straining his neck and eyes and mind over thick tomes of scriptures. There is a practical aspect also to this—in this old age his eye sight is failing, and since he is expected to be always on the move and carry no possessions it is impossible for him to read and study books and scriptures while adhering to this nomadic lifestyle typical of a wandering friar or a mendicant. Even if he stays at a hermitage as a resident monk, it's prudent and wise for him to spend time in meditation and contemplation peacefully in seclusion. This would not only rejuvenate his worn-out body and soul but would be conducive to his all-round peace and tranquility. Should he wish to spend time on hearing what the scriptures say, he would get ample opportunity in a monastery where regular discourses are held on spiritual matters. So he should spend his spare time peacefully, contemplating and meditating.] [6] (5-6).

स्नानं पानं तथा शौचमद्भिः पूताभिराचरेत् । नदीपुलिनशायी स्याद्देवागारेषु वा स्वपेत् ॥७॥  
नात्यर्थं सुखदुःखाभ्यां शरीरमुपतापयेत् । स्तूयमानो न तुष्येत निन्दितो न शपेत्परान् ॥८॥

snānaṃ pānaṃ tathā śaucamadbhiḥ pūtābhirācaret /  
nadīpulinaśāyī syāddevā-gāreṣu vā svapet // 7 //  
nātyarthaṃ sukhaduḥkhābhyāṃ śārīramupatāyet /  
stūyamāno na tuṣyeta nindito na śapetparān // 8 //

7-8. He should perform his daily ablutions and the regular chores of attending to nature's call etc. by using clean fresh water (obtained from any fresh water source such as a well, river, stream, lake or pond). This water is also useful for his drinking

purposes. [That is, he should not store water and carry it with him in a flask or other container.]

He should take rest and find a temporary shelter either on the banks of a river or in a temple.

He should lead a moderate life, neither resting too much and becoming lazy nor over-straining himself to the point of getting fatigued and worn out.

He should maintain an exemplary level of indifference, equilibrium and equanimity by neither feeling happy or excited when someone praises him nor feeling annoyed, agitated and angry when someone insults him or speaks ill of him. He never curses or abuses his opponents and detractors (7-8).

ब्रह्मचर्येण संतिष्ठेदप्रमादेन मस्करी । दर्शनं स्पर्शनं केलिः कीर्तनं गुह्यभाषणम् ॥९॥  
संकल्पोऽध्यवसायश्च क्रियानिर्वृत्तिरेव च । एतन्मैथुनमष्टाङ्गं प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः ॥१०॥  
विपरीतं ब्रह्मचर्यमनुष्ठेयं मुमुक्षुभिः । यज्जगद्भासकं भानं नित्यं भाति स्वतः स्फुरत् ॥११॥

॥ इतिकठरुद्रोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

brahmacaryeṇa saṁtiṣṭhedapramādena maskarī /  
darśanaṁ sparśanaṁ keliḥ kīrtanaṁ guhyabhāṣaṇam // 9 //  
saṁkalpo'dhyavasāyaśca kriyānnirvṛttireva ca /  
etanmaithunamaṣṭāṅgaṁ pravadanti maṇiṣiṇaḥ // 10 //  
viparītaṁ brahmacaryama-nuṣṭheyam mumukṣubhiḥ /  
yajjagadbhāsaṁ bhānaṁ nityaṁ bhāti svataḥ sphurat // 11 //

// thus ends Katharudra Upanishad, verse nos. 1-11 //

9-11. A Sanyasi should be careful not to be indolent and lazy or indulgent in and attached to anything or anybody whatsoever. He should observe the laws of Brahmacharya (a celibate way of life marked by abstinence, continence, self restraint and control over the sense organs accompanied by observance of penance and austerity).

Wise and erudite people have said that 'intercourse' is of eight types—viz. (1) having a desire to watch women, (2) touch them, (3) play with them, (4) talk with them in general terms by being near to them or keeping contact with them to enable conversation, (5) discussing secret matters having sexual overtones, (6) desiring or yearning to have sexual contact with them, (7) the physical attempt to establish conjugal relationships with them, and (8) the actual sexual activity when physical intercourse and the act of making love to them is done. A true and honest Sanyasi should abhor the idea and banish such thoughts from his mind altogether.

Therefore, Brahmacharya is to be understood in its broader ramifications which would include abstaining from any of the above eight types of deemed intercourses<sup>1</sup>. A Sanyasi who is desirous of Moksha (i.e. who seeks spiritual liberation and deliverance; who wishes to have emancipation and salvation of the soul and its permanent freedom from all bondages pertaining to this world and its endless cycle of birth and death; who wants freedom from worldly snares and delusory attractions)



should be very careful from these temptations while observing the tenets of Brahmacharya (9-11).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>There is another way of interpreting the words 'Brahmacharya' and 'intercourse' from the spiritual perspective. In this interpretation we replace the word 'woman' with the phrase 'world and the charms of its sense objects', and the word 'intercourse' with the phrase 'interaction with and attractions for these charms', and the rest of the meaning fall into place automatically. The word 'Brahmacharya' would now include self-restraint of the sense organs so that they are not attracted by their respective objects in this world and become prey of their snares. It would mean exemplary non-indulgence and non-involvement at all levels such as mental, intellectual, sub-conscious, physical, emotional and sentimental. This holistic and all-round Brahmacharya is really what is intended here for a Sanyasi; it is more important for him than merely non-indulgence in sex because for one he might not be inclined to indulge in sexual subjects but very much occupied with worldly matters which he had left behind when he took the vows of Sanyas. What good is it then in taking to Sanyas if his mind is pre-occupied with worldly matters, because it is the mind that is the harbinger of all troubles as well as the one which can become either the provider of liberation and deliverance to a man or the one which ensnares and makes him bonded to his endless desires, expectations, hopes and aspirations?]

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### (4.3) Varaaha Upanishad:

The Varaaha Upanishad/Varaaho-panishad has been taught by Lord Varaaha, the Boar incarnation of Lord Vishnu who is the sustainer and protector of creation and the Supreme Being, to sage Ribhu. Hence, it is one of those Upanishads that were revealed by the Lord himself. It espouses and expounds upon the eclectic philosophy of 'Advaitya Vedanta', i.e. the doctrine of 'non-duality and uniformity' in creation which presents a unified and uniform vision of the world rather than a fractured view. It can be broadly classified into two components—the first half is dedicated to an elaborate discussion of this philosophy and how this changes the world view of the enlightened man (Canto 1-3) as preached directly by the Lord, while the second half is an exposition of the same philosophy by sage Ribhu for the benefit of another sage Nidagh on how this enlightened view can be actually realised and practiced by inculcating divine values in life (Canto 4) and by doing Yoga (Canto 5).

Canto 1 narrates that Lord Varaaha was pleased by severe Tapa (austerity and penance) done by sage Ribhu, and when the sage requested the Lord for Brahm Vidya (the divine knowledge of the Truth personified as the supreme Brahm, knowledge that is liberating and delivering for the creature's soul) the Lord lists the long chain of ninety six Tattvas (fundamental principles of creation) and finally concludes that inspite of gaining access to the highest level of metaphysical and theological knowledge the best path of obtaining liberation and deliverance is Bhakti or devotion to God.

Canto 2 deals with the four preliminary disciplines called 'Saadhna Chatushtaya'—viz. the true nature of the Atma as the true 'self', pure consciousness

and bliss, how the self-realised person becomes one with the Parmatma, the Supreme Being, how this lead to freedom from the fetters of Karma (deeds and actions), and how meditation leads to dissolution and overcoming of the mind etc. Brahm is the universal Absolute, the unequivocal Truth, and the only Reality in creation. It is the cosmic Spirit and Consciousness of creation that is present uniformly in each single unit of creation, from the single celled one right up to the most complex and colossal one, including the inner being of the spiritual seeker as his 'true self', as his Atma. It has no specific form, shape or colour; it is attributeless and invisible. But at the same time it has revealed itself in the form of the visible world complete with its stupendous variety and astounding diversity as a proof not only of its existence but also of its supernatural powers and qualities.

A wise and enlightened person who can see this Brahm inside his own self as well as in the rest of the creation, who has this grand and cosmic view of Brahm and is convinced of its truth obtains freedom from all ignorance arising out of a distorted and limited view of the supreme transcendental Brahm who is beyond definition and comprehension.

Canto 3 is an extension of Canto 2 and describes the Parmatma or the Supreme Soul as an embodiment of Sat-Chit-Anand (truth, consciousness and bliss). It is stressed here that the best and most effective way of attaining him is Bhakti or devotion.

Canto 4 is divided into two sections like the Vedas—the first section is the Mantras, and the second is the Brahman. There are in all 42 Mantras in section 1 which list the seven Bhumikas (stages of development of wisdom), while the second section consisting of 43 verses are like the Brahman which give a detailed description of all the stages. It, inter alia, describes the concept of Jivan Mukti, and cites the examples of sage Shuka and Vamdeo as epitomes of this type of Mukti. As for the various Bhumikas, another Upanishad deals with them also, viz. the Akchi Upanishad which is 23<sup>rd</sup> Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition.

Finally, Canto 5 is exclusively dedicated to Yoga and its practice. It describes the various aspects and limbs of Yoga, such as Angas (limbs or branches), Bandhas (control of vital energy of the Pran), Chakras (subtle energy centers in the body), Naadis (nerves), OM and its use for Japa (repetition). This Canto winds up the Upanishad by outlining how the spiritual aspirant can obtain final liberation and deliverance by a judicious mix of the physical exercises of Yoga and the great tenets of metaphysics.

Since the theme of our book is 'Sanyas', we shall limit ourselves to reading of only those verses that are to this theme, and skip the rest of this big and elaborate Upanishad. Hence, we shall read only verse nos. 4, and 37—45 of Canto 2.

The rest of this excellent Varaaha Upanishad is excluded from our present book 'Anthology of the Sanyas Upanishads' as they are not relevant to it. However, the entire Upanishad in full has been published as part of the author's series on all the 108 Vedic Upanishads that has been published independently in English by a reputed Indian publisher. If any reader is interested he or she can ask the author for details to connect with the publisher.

॥ वराहोपनिषत् ॥

## सर्ग २

एवं जितेन्द्रियो भूत्वा सर्वत्र ममतामतिम् । विहाय साक्षिचैतन्ये मयि कुर्यादहंमतिम् ॥४॥

## Vāraha Upanishad, Canto 2

evaṃ jitendriyo bhūtvā sarvatra mamatāmatim /  
vihāya sākṣicaitanye mayi kuryādahaṃmatim // 4 //

4. He (i.e. the renunciate person; the Sanyasi) should abandon all kind of attractions, attachments, infatuations, longings or a sense of belonging that he might have for anything—i.e. he should develop profound degree of renunciation as mentioned earlier in verse no. 2 above. He should learn to exercise the greatest of restraint on his self and the organs of the gross body.

Instead, he should be firmly of the view that his true ‘self’ is nothing else but pure consciousness which is a mere neutral witness of everything, without getting emotionally attached with anything. That is, he should develop the noble and auspicious view that ‘I am that pure immaculate cosmic Consciousness which is a neutral witness to everything in this world.’ [A witness is supposed to be neutral, unemotional, detached and uninvolved in the happening. This helps him to observe things in the correct perspective and his version is regarded as authentic as opposed to biased witnesses who would see things from a pre-conceived angle and develop a tainted view of the same event. If a witness to an event is not dispassionate and neutral, then he is not worth relying; he is not a true and honest witness. Therefore, a sincere seeker of the knowledge of Brahm should, and is expected to, inculcate the great virtues of complete dispassion for, detachment with and non-involvement in the world and its affairs.] (4).

अहिरिव जनयोगं सर्वदा वर्जयेद्यः कुणपमिव सुनारीं त्यक्तुकामो विरागी । विषमिव विषयादीन्मन्यमानो  
दुरन्ताङ्गगति परमहंसो वासुदेवोऽहमेव ॥३७॥

ahiriva janayogaṃ sarvadā varjayedyah kuṇapamiva sunārīṃ tyaktukāmo  
virāgī / viṣamiva viṣayādīnmanyamāno durantāñjagati paramahaṃso  
vāsudevo’hameva // 37 //

37. [This verse describes the chief characteristics of a truly renunciate person called a Vairagi. Refer also verse no. 4 of this Canto 2 in this context.]

A Vairagi (a renunciate and dispassionate person who has sacrificed his desires for worldly charms in order to attain spiritual emancipation and salvation) abandons all forms of contacts or companies with everything related to ‘grossness and untruth’ such as the world and the body just like a person running away from a snake

or throwing one if it is caught by mistake. [That is, he is terribly scared of this contact and treats it as dangerous as the snake. He might be entangled in it till he has not become aware of the Truth, but once this awareness comes he would not lose a single moment in discarding the world and the body.]

A Vairagi desirous of sacrificing the sensual attractions of worldly charms and the overwhelming urge for sense gratification, collectively called 'Kaam' (literally lust, yearnings, lasciviousness and passions; desire for sensual gratification and enjoyments of the material world and its juicy attractions) on the altar of nobler pursuits and higher goals of life should abandon contact with a beautiful woman just like the case when people shun a rotting corpse and go away from it at a distance because of the foul and loathsome stink emanating from it.

He abandons all the sense objects of this enchanting but entrapping and deluding material world like they were horrible poison though this world is very difficult to eliminate and shun. [That is, he would have to make conscious effort to renounce this material world. It is a difficult proposition and would require strong will and resolve.]

Such exalted persons are called 'Param Hans', literally one who is as pure and uncorrupted as the divine Swan<sup>1</sup>, as they regard their own selves (i.e. their soul and true 'self') as an image of the supreme Lord known as Vasudeo (Vishnu the sustainer and protector of the creation, the Lord who had incarnated himself as Varaaha). With this eclectic and sublime concept of the 'self', they become spiritually enlightened and think in this term—'I am indeed Vasudeo'. [A wise and self-realised person understands that his true 'self' known as the Atma is none other than the supreme Atma of creation. It is indeed the microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness that pervades uniformly in all the units of creation, whether as the mortal individual living being or the immortal entities known as Gods. Refer verse nos. 34-35 of this Canto 2 above. Vasudeo is another name of Lord Vishnu, the personified Supreme Being. Hence a self-realised person develops the enlightened view that his Atma is as divine, ethereal and sublime as the cosmic Atma that lives in Lord Vishnu, i.e. there is no difference between the two. This is the great 'Advaitya' or non-dual philosophy propounded and espoused by the Upanishads.] (37).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The enlightened and realised person thinks of himself as a *Hans* or a Swan and feels exhilarated that he is not an ordinary man bogged down by worldly fetters, but an exalted soul that is like a Swan.

The bird Swan or Hans is considered the most pure, clean, wise, erudite and clever among the birds. It is said to eat pearls, which means it picks up and accepts only the best amid the variety of things available to it in the form of an assortment of various gems and jewels representing the dazzling charms of this world. It is also reputed to drink milk leaving aside the water content in it symbolising its ability to imbibe the essence and the best, and leave the rest aside. It is also the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati, the patron Goddess of knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, speech and learning, indicating that it bears these glorious virtues. Hence, the reference to a swan while describing a creature conscious of the vital wind or Pran passing through him means the basic, inherent and intrinsic tendency of that wisened and intelligent creature is to be the best, most pure and divine, wise, awakened and enlightened, adroit, clever and sagacious like the swan, and pick all the goodness and forsake all that is bad in this world. Saraswati rides on a swan, symbolising the creature's inborn enlightenment and excellence of his mental caliber. Symbolically, Saraswati resides in his Pran because it rides on the swan, i.e. in his heart, throat and mind—that is, his heart has purity of emotions, he speaks well of all, and his wise words are sought after by all as priceless gems of wisdom, and his mind is intelligent, discerning and

noble. A wise man is expected to pick the truth from amongst the basket of assorted charms present in this creation, and leave aside the non-truths.

The alphabet 'Ha' of the word 'Hans' is sounded by the vibration of the exhaled wind passing through the vocal cords present in the throat or the wind pipe which connects to the nose, while the alphabet 'Sa' is sounded by the root of the tongue which opens into the mouth when the breath is inhaled. Both the nose and the mouth open in the same cavity called the throat. Hence, the inter relationship between 'Ha' and 'Sa' is evident. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is like the divine swan, but he was unaware of his own divinity and sublimity, his exalted and noble stature, till that was pointed out to him. So he must become one like a 'swan', remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan.

During the twenty-four hour period covering a single day and night, a person inhales and exhales, or breathes, roughly twenty-one thousand times, because each cycle of inhalation and exhalation is equivalent to saying one Mantra 'Hans' consisting of the two syllables 'Ha and Sa' (refer Dhyānbindu Upanishad, verse no. 63).

The Dhyān Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 24 and 62-63, and the Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-132, Canto 2, verse nos. 9-11, and Canto 6, verse no. 20, 52-54 of the Krishna Yajur Veda; the Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 82-83 of Sam Veda; the Param Hans and Hanso-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition are exclusively dedicated to explain the concept of the pure conscious Atma by way of using the metaphor of a Hans.]

इदं सत्यमिदं सत्यं सत्यमेतदिहोच्यते । अहं सत्यं परं ब्रह्म मत्तः किञ्चिन्न विद्यते ॥३८॥

idaṁ satyamidaṁ satyaṁ satyametadihocyate /  
ahaṁ satyaṁ paraṁ brahm mattaḥ kiñcinna vidyate // 38 //

38. Such a person sees everything in this world as a manifestation of the eternal Truth. [That is, he sees the same universal and truthful Brahm in each unit of creation.]

Therefore, he accepts everything as true<sup>1</sup>. This leads him to be convinced of the eclectic truth of the scriptural maxims and axioms that say 'I am true and truth personified', 'I am the supreme transcendental Brahm personified', and 'therefore there is nothing beyond me'. [Once he is convinced of the first eclectic statement, the other are natural corollaries. If he is 'true' then naturally he is 'truth personified' because there can be only one and not two Truths. Since Brahm is the only eternal Truth in creation, it follows that such a person must be 'Brahm personified'. And finally, since Brahm is all-pervading, all-encompassing and all-incorporating, since everything in creation had emerged from Brahm, and since Brahm forms the outer boundary of creation, it follows that nothing exists beyond Brahm, and therefore, 'beyond me', as I am Brahm personified!] (38).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>This observation made by a wise and enlightened man should not be confused with an identical statement made by an ignorant man who has no idea of what the 'real truth' is as he is under a thick veil of delusions. Such a man uses this particular statement made by a wise man that 'what is seen by me around myself in this world is true' as an escape route and a proof that he is not doing anything wrong by being indulgent and engrossed in pursuing this world. As is clear here, the wise man's assertion is quite the opposite of the ignorant man's—for while the wise man has

developed the divine insight that enables him to penetrate and peer behind the external façade to see the subtle and sublime truth hidden imperceptibly inside, an ability that makes him see the truthful reality of this world and understand the truth of the fact that same cosmic Consciousness that resides in his own bosom as the Atma is also the Atma of the rest of the external world, and that this world is a manifestation of the Supreme Being because nothing exists that is not this Supreme Being, the ignorant man only takes the statement at its face value and finds an excuse in it to become indulgent and engrossed. This man sees only the external façade and treats it as the much flaunted and lauded ‘truth’ without knowing that he is only cheating himself, that he is calling a shining piece of polished brass as gold by merely relying upon the external glaze and polish of the former that resembles that of the latter. He is a deluded man.]

उप समीपे यो वासो जीवात्मपरमात्मनोः । उपवासः स विज्ञेयो न तु कायस्य शोषणम् ॥३९॥

upa samīpe yo vāso jīvātmaparamātmanoḥ /  
upavāsaḥ sa vijñeyo na tu kāyasya śoṣaṇam // 39 //

39. Real ‘Upvaas’, literally meaning to ‘fast’, is the cohabitation of the individual Atma with the Parmatma<sup>1</sup>. In this state of existence, the Atma of the individual man rises higher than its normal course in routine life and lives in an exalted state of self-realisation which brings it closer to its naturally divine, eclectic, sublime, holy and exalted form. This is the true meaning and intent of fasting, and not merely abstaining from food. [If one is not enlightened enough about the real intention and metaphysical meaning of fasting then it would only create more craving for food in him which would result in binge eating on the one hand and constant diversion of the mind to eatables even during the period of fasting. The man would be watching time so that he can grab food with the eagerness of fish taking to water. This is not the intention of fasting, and it is more harmful than being of any good. It is better to eat moderately than to fast and have the mind yearning for food.] (39).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The word for fasting is ‘Upvaas’ which has the word ‘Vaas’ as its component. Vaas means to dwell, to live, to reside. The first component ‘Up’ means ‘additional, on, upper, near, close, with, by, vicinity, proximity’. Hence the composite word ‘Upvaas’ refers to the ‘upper or higher’ state of existence when the individual creature resides in close ‘proximity or vicinity’ of the supreme Brahm that is obtainable only upon self-realisation and self-awareness. This supreme Brahm resides not externally but inside one’s own self, one’s own being, one’s own bosom as the Atma which has attained a higher level of wisdom and enlightenment.]

कायशोषणमात्रेण का तत्र ह्यविवेकिनाम् । वल्मीकताडनादेव मृतः किं नु महोरगः ॥४०॥

kāyaśoṣaṇamātreṇa kā tatra hyavivekinām /  
valmīkatāḍanādeva mṛtaḥ kim nu mahorgaḥ // 40 //

40. Those who are stupid and ignorant think that by merely making the body suffer and subjecting it to harsh rigours of a strict life they would be able to train and tame the Atma and help it to find liberation and deliverance<sup>1</sup>. Does the snake living inside a hole in a mud-mound die if one beats the outer surface of this mound?<sup>2</sup> (40).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>That is, some people think that the worldly tendencies of the ‘self’ can be controlled by putting restrictions on the body. They think that by depriving the body of its natural needs such as the need for food and drink, for sleep and work, for shelter and clothing and for such other basic comforts and needs that cannot be categorised as luxury and extravagant by any stretch of imagination they are doing some kind of great spiritual practice such as observance of austerity, doing penances, suffering for some noble cause and other such spiritually uplifting exercises—collectively called doing Tapa, then they are living in a fool’s paradise. Forceful suppression of basic bodily needs and natural desires is tantamount to oppression if these desires and needs are not overcome naturally on their own by inculcating a profound degree of renunciation and detachment from getting involved in them. Such suppression is artificial Tapa and is equivalent to cheating one’s own self, an exercise which leads one to no where. Rather, it would only stoke the pressure of desires and yearnings to such an extent that one day they would explode like a pressure cooker whose vent has been chocked. In their ignorance and stupidity they think that the means of spiritual liberation and deliverance is to torture the body such as by prolonged fasting and doing severe Tapa, i.e. by doing severe penance, keeping punishing vows, observing strict rules of austerity and other codes of religious laws that require prolonged sufferance of the physical body in general and causing misery for the body as a means of atonement for past sins in the hope that by inflicting pain and sufferance on the body the soul would be benefited. Nothing is further from the truth—for instead of finding peace and happiness such persons are only causing an insult to the Viraat Purush, the Supreme Being whose image this body is on the one hand, and who resides at the same time as the immaculate and pure conscious Atma in this body. So, instead of any spiritual gain and coming closer to the Lord they actually move away from him and cause undue harassment to the ‘self’, the Atma, by disturbing the latter’s peace and calmness. When the gross components of the body such as the organs of perception and action are agitated and uncomfortable, the subtle components such as the mind and intellect would also be agitated and in discomfort. Since the Atma lives in this body, it cannot be totally immune to all this trouble inflicted upon the body in which it lives just like the case when the house is on fire, its resident cannot sleep in peace. So the concept of making the body suffer as a means of spiritual practice is not the proper way of spiritual upliftment and liberation. On the contrary, it is counter-productive as it robs the resident Atma of its physical comfort and mental peace. This causes unwarranted diversion that distracts the Atma from its ultimate goal of finding eternal peace, happiness and bliss. It interferes in the Atma’s natural state of being in a state of meditation, because physical discomfort is a great irritant during the earlier stages of spiritual practices.

<sup>2</sup>This does not happen; the snake would go deeper into the hole and retract its body to form a spiral, so no matter how much the external mound is thrashed the snake will not be harmed and would survive the beating. In fact, the thick layer of mud would act as a protective shield around it. Similarly, by torturing the body the inherent desires, aspirations, yearnings, traits, nature and temperaments of the man are not overcome; they are not at all affected. The dark veil of ignorance that has covered his mind-intellect and prevents the inherent light of wisdom and enlightenment emanating from his self-illuminated Atma from shining through is not eliminated by torturing the body. Indeed it is true that certain benefits are obtained by following this path of making the body suffer, such as doing Hath Yoga, but then when these benefits begin to bear fruits, the practitioner would be so much dazzled by his newly acquired mystical powers that instead of diverting them for his spiritual upliftment and rising to the next higher level in the path of final liberation and deliverance of his ‘self’ he would be swept off his feet by the fame and powers that come with any achievement, be it spiritual or worldly, and begins to enjoy the limelight of honour and praise in which he finds himself in; he begins to hallucinate and get diverted from his true path and goal in life. He would boast of his

achievements and forget that he is missing the target of his painstaking efforts altogether.]

अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद परोक्षज्ञानमेव तत् । अहं ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद साक्षात्कारः स उच्यते ॥४१॥

asti brahmeti cedveda parokṣhajñānmeva tat /  
aham brahmeti cedveda sākṣhātkārḥ sa ucyate // 41 //

41. Those who are even certain of the axiomatic truth of the doctrine which says that 'Brahm is', i.e. that there is some unknown divine and unexplained entity which is supreme and transcendental in creation, have only a superficial knowledge of Brahm. On the contrary, those who make the honest statement 'I am Brahm' with truthful conviction and only after having actually experienced and verified the veracity of this axiomatic truth are indeed the ones who have the real and truthful knowledge of Brahm<sup>1</sup> (41).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>It is crucial to understand this verse correctly and clearly. Those who have not experienced and witnessed first hand the presence of the supreme Brahm as the pure conscious Atma residing inside their own bosom have only a theoretical knowledge of Brahm. Anything that is learnt in theory but not practically verified is bound to create doubt and confusion as to its authenticity and reliability. So, even if one has learnt about the existence of some divine entity known as Brahm by study of the scriptures but has not been able to actually experience and witness Brahm's presence in practice has only a superficial and not-too certain knowledge of Brahm. Therefore, only those who have realised the truth of the axiomatic maxim by experiencing and witnessing this Brahm in their own 'self' as the Atma which is the cosmic Consciousness revealed in the gross body are the ones who can assertively and honestly claim 'I am Brahm'. Such people are firm in their conviction and faith as compared to those who rely only on hearsay and literal texts. For the latter category of people, when they say 'I am Brahm', they are merely repeating the sayings of the scriptures like a parrot.

In other words, only those who have realised that their own 'self', the pure conscious Atma, is nothing but Brahm personified are the ones who have correct knowledge of Brahm. The rest only have a theoretical knowledge of Brahm that is not applied by them in practice. They can be thrown into a cesspool of doubts if by some remote chance some other theory comes their way which might be more convincing on the face of it. Such people are kept churning in the ocean represented by the voluminous scriptures in their search of the real 'truth'. On the contrary, when one has witnessed something first hand or experienced it directly then no matter how much others tell him about something else he would not believe it. So a man who has experienced the bliss of self-realisation first hand is more convinced of the fact that Brahm is bliss personified as compared to one who has just read about this axiomatic truth in some scriptural text.]

यस्मिन्काले स्वमात्मानं योगी जानाति केवलम् । तस्मात्कालात्समारभ्य जीवन्मुक्तो भवेदसौ ॥४२॥

yasminkāle svamātmānam yogī jānāti kevalam /  
tasmātkālātsamarabhya jīvanmukto bhavedasau // 42 //

42. In the instant when the ascetic realises that his truthful Atma, i.e. his 'self' and pure consciousness, is the 'only thing that matters (the state of Kaivalya)', i.e. when



he realises that there is nothing spiritually true and real and worthy of attention except the Atma, it is in that instant that he is deemed to have obtained 'Jivan Mukti', i.e. he has become free from all the fetters that had been shackling him to ignorance and delusions even while he lives like an ordinary person having a gross body that lives in, interacts with and is surrounded by the material world of sense objects (42).

अहं ब्रह्मेति नियतं मोक्षहेतुर्महात्मनाम् । द्वे पदे बन्धमोक्षाय निर्ममेति ममेति च ॥४३॥

aham brahmeti niyataṁ mokṣaheturmahātmanām /  
dve pade bandhamokṣhāya nirmameti mameti ca // 43 //

43. When this concept that 'I am Brahm personified' is firmly established, when it is firmly ingrained in the conscience of the ascetic, when he is fully convinced of its veracity and authenticity, and when the knowledge of this axiomatic truth is firmly and irrefutably established in his mind beyond any iota of doubt, it is only then that this knowledge can become an instrument for obtaining Moksha (emancipation and salvation). [Otherwise the ascetic would doubt whether or not he is following the correct path.]

On the contrary, those people whose mind and intellect are mired by such deluding notions as 'this is mine' and 'that is not mine' are indeed ignorant of the reality and truth. [They are totally ignorant of the eclectic concept of non-duality and the metaphysical philosophy of oneness and uniformity of creation. Since the same Brahm has revealed himself as 'this' and 'that' as well as 'me' and 'you', then the question of an entity being 'that' and 'this' does not arise in the first place, and therefore the concept of 'this belongs to me' and 'that does not belong to me' has no locus standi.] (43).

ममेति बध्यते जन्तुर्निर्ममेति विमुच्यते । बाह्यचिन्ता न कर्तव्या तथैवान्तरचिन्तिका । सर्वचिन्तां  
समुत्सृज्य स्वस्थो भव सदा ऋभो ॥४४॥

mameti badhyate janturnirmameti vimucyate /  
bāhyacintā na kartavyā tathāivāntarcintikā /  
sarvacintāṁ samutsrjya svastho bhava sadā ṛbho // 44 //

44. 'This is mine' or 'this belongs to me'—this notion is the root cause of all forms of longing, attachments, attractions and infatuations with the material things of this world as well as all a progenitor of all forms of relationships that an aspirant develops with others in this world. This erroneous view causes all types of fetters that tie him down to this world; it is entrapping and shackling. On the contrary, 'nothing belongs to me'—this concept is a highly evolved way of thinking and it leads to indifference, detachment and renunciation. This eclectic and wise view leads to automatic breaking away of all fetters that shackle the spiritual aspirant to this world; it paves the way for his ultimate emancipation and salvation.

Therefore, the person who has achieved the exalted state of detachment and equanimity as mentioned herein above should not worry at all either about the external objects of the material world or about the inner traits and temperaments that are inherently present inside him. [That is, he should not be disturbed at all by the

enjoyments or pains coming his way from this external world as well as by his own nature and traits that constantly keep nagging at him. He should completely neglect them and not be perturbed by them; he should pay no attention to them. He should live in a state of exemplary equanimity and total indifference, accepting what comes naturally to him and dealing with things as and when they come his way, without getting upset if something expected is not received or something happens against expectations.]

Oh Ribhu! Discard all sorts of worries because it is an unnecessary and futile exercise; forget about having any kind of reservations, doubts, uncertainties and confusions about ‘this’ and ‘that’. Be cheerful, blissful, happy and healthy; be at peace with your exalted self (44).

संकल्पमात्रकलनेन जगत्समग्रं संकल्पमात्रकलने हि जगद्विलासः । संकल्पमात्रमिदमुत्सृज  
निर्विकल्पमाश्रित्य मामकपदं हृदि भावयस्व ॥४५॥

saṁkalpamātrakalanena jagatsamagraṁ saṁkalpamātrakalane hi  
jagadvilāsaḥ /  
saṁkalpamātramidamutsrja nirvikalpamāśritya māmakapadam hṛdi  
bhāvayasva // 45 //

45. This external world is there only because one makes a ‘Sankalp’ (literally meaning resolutions, volitions, determinations, promises, vows etc.) about it. It has its existence because the man is convinced that it is there; it is a determination of the mind which makes the man resolutely believe about the world’s existence. He has aspirations and yearnings, and then relentlessly pursues the world to fulfill them. He makes vows and promises, and then strives to keep them. He determines that there are certain things in this world that would give him happiness and comfort, and so endeavours to get them. He has expectations from this world, and when they are not fulfilled he is pained and aggrieved, he gets annoyed and excited and angry.

Hence, the world—complete with all its attractions, its captivating charms, its pains and agonies, its happiness and joys etc.—is witnessed and experienced only because one is determined to witness and experience its existence<sup>1</sup>.

Hence, you should discard all ‘Sankalps’ which cause so much of consternation and perplexity for you, and instead find peace and stability by being firmly establishing my non-dual and truthful form in your heart<sup>2</sup> (45).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The term pain, sorrow, agony, happiness, joy, pleasure, comfort, contentedness, wants, desires, needs etc.—all of them are relative terms and do not have a standard bench-mark to decide what they constitute of and what their intensity is. For example, one feels the pain and grieves only because one is certain that a particular instance is the cause of pain and agony for him. The same situation might just be of no consequence to the other person. For instance, if there is a death in the family, one member is weeping uncontrollably and uncomfortably, while the other is not weeping at all, he is not affected at all. One is attracted to anything only because he thinks that it is worth having or enjoying. For instance, a sick man would loathe food which would make others salivate. A child yearns for toys which are useless for grown ups. Similarly, a man’s threshold level of tolerance would decide the severity of pain he feels, and whether he feels the pain at all or not. A given situation may upset a man, while another would take it in his stride or just overlook it and go on with his life as if nothing has happened. A particular material object might be

indispensable for a man, while the other has no need at all for it. So we observe that everything related to this world has only a relative value and importance.

<sup>2</sup>That is, stop getting hallucinated and being tossed and flung around by so many Sankalps that you and your mind make about this artificial and deluding world. Instead, be steady on one 'truth' by abandoning all forms of 'imaginary truths'. Avoid making futile determinations, resolutions and volitions that you have been making in relation to the world. You should rather focus your attention on my truthful form residing in your heart as the Atma, and you should be firm and unwavering in this spiritual conviction of yours. In other words, do not waste your precious time in making Sankalps for finding bliss, peace, happiness and tranquility in the outside world, but turn inwards and find them inside your own self. Remember, your 'self' is an eternal fount of these glorious virtues, and since this fount is present within you, why do you search for it outside? Therefore, you should not even make a Sankalp to find Mukti and Moksha by involving yourself in the external world in the way of doing numerous religious exercises, reading of scriptures, doing deeds, keeping vows and fasts, going on pilgrims etc., or attempt to please the Supreme Being by such efforts. Remember that this Supreme Being is a resident of your own self as the pure conscious Atma that resides in the body itself, and hence you need not search for the Lord outside. Say, how can an entity that is present in your own bosom be found outside of your self? This verse has a profound practical import. It stresses that one should first attempt to improve himself before even hoping to find liberation and deliverance from the fetters created by negative traits and characteristics. The aspirant is expected to clean himself spiritually first before making a determined bid for emancipation and salvation, because otherwise he would be facing an uphill tread that would sag his spirits and act as a cumbersome drag on his soul. He should first improve himself and set his own house in order before attempting to improve the lot of the world.

Does this mean that he should not do good deeds or read the scriptures? No, this is not the intent here. The world is a formidably vast proposition of colossal proportions—there is no end of doing deeds and there is no limit of types of deeds one can do that come under the definition of being good, auspicious and righteous, there are so many scriptures and uncountable number of their interpretations. He would be spending a whole lifetime but not even scrap its surface so to say. The scriptures tell him that this world is a manifestation of the Supreme Being, so he goes on searching for the Lord in this world which is akin to searching for a needle in a vast ocean. As compared to this scene is the Atma or the pure conscious self of the aspirant. This Atma is the Supreme Being known as Brahm personified, and it can be very easily reached and experienced by a bit of faith, practice and resilience. So if the easy and attainable path of Mukti and Moksha is available close at hand, why should one go out to search for it in the vast and endless realm of the external world?]

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## ANTHOLOGY OF THE 'SANYAS' UPANISHADS

(Sanskrit, Roman Transliteration, English rendering, Notes)

### Chapter 5: Sanyas Upanishads of the Atharva Veda

This Chapter contains the following Upanishads of the Atharva Veda that deal with the theme of Sanyas:-

- 5.1 Narad Parivrajaka Upanishad
- 5.2 Paramhans-Parivrajaka Upanishad
- 5.3 Par-Brahm Upanishad

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#### (5.1) Narad Parivrajak Upanishad:

This is major Upanishad dealing exclusively with the concept of Sanyas—the life of complete serenity, renunciation and dispassion, and one that deals with the truthful monastic way of life. It was enunciated by the great celestial sage Narad, and is revealed in the form of nine 'Updeshas' or teachings which we shall call Cantos in this Chapter.

It is a combination of prose and verses composed in the Anushtup Chanda (metre) style.

In Canto 1, the sages Shaunak and others have asked sage Narad about the way by which a person can find freedom and deliverance from the endless and stubborn fetters of this material. Narad, in his answer, starts with giving a detailed account of the four Ashrams and Varnas (phases of a man's life and the classes in which the society is divided), and their relevant laws and tenets.

In Canto 2 sage Shaunak has asked Narad to give a detailed account of the sanctified process, of the formalities and procedure to be followed in accepting the life of Sanyas.

In Canto 3 sage Narad has asked Brahma, the creator, to describe the virtues of those who are eligible to accept the life and vows of Sanyas, and Brahma answers him in detail. In this process, Brahma explains the concept of 'Aatur Sanyas'—i.e. about an aspirant who is very eager to accept the rigorous vows of renunciation as a means of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation.

Cantos 4 and 5 explain in detail the due diligent process of accepting Sanyas and its tremendous importance and significance for the spiritual aspirant. The various types of Sanyas and their differences are enumerated in Canto 5.

Canto 6 deals with the eclectic concept of Turiyateet (which is the transcendental state of existence) and how to obtain it. It also highlights the various aspects of daily life of an aspirant who has accepted the vows of Sanyas.

Canto 7 describes the normal laws governing the life of various types of Sanyasis that would help them reach their goal of self-realisation, and provides them with the means by which such self-realised Sanyasis can find deliverance from the cycle of birth and death.

In Canto 8 Brahma extensively explains to Narad the divine Mantra OM pertaining to Pranav or Brahm, the supreme transcendental Being, when the sage asked him about the Mantra which can help an aspirant to attain final Mukti (liberation and deliverance) from this world. It goes on to describe elaborately the meaning of the numerous terms that are used to indicate the various facets of the same universal divine entity known as Brahm that is supreme and transcendental. Here, almost all the esoteric terms used as adjectives or epithets for Brahm have been explained at a single place, and in this respect this Canto is unique in the pantheon of the Upanishads.

And finally Canto 9 marks the culmination of one's spiritual search when he is enlightened about the supreme transcendental Brahm. Hence, this Canto attempts to narrate about this Brahm. It also describes in the process the signs of a self and Brahm realised ascetic, and how he obtains the ultimate destination for his self. This Canto concludes the most profound of Sanyas Upanishads.

This Upanishad appears to be highly repetitive as the same thing is being said again and again. One plausible reason is that sage Narad might have approached Brahma on different occasions, and each time asked the same question for clarification, or in the hope that some new thing would be taught to him. Each such occasion was recorded as a separate Updesh (teaching) or Canto. Another reason may be that the conversation between Narad and Brahma was recorded for posterity by different sages who were separated from each other by vast geographical distances. One did not know what the other recorded or taught his own line of disciples. When sage Veda Vyas, the compiler of the Vedas and the Upanishads, sat down to compile the Upanishads, he decided to collect all such versions and put them under one roof, giving each version one distinct number. Hence, since all these versions appear to be saying the same thing with slight variations in language and tenor, and they all relate to the same topic of Sanyas taught by the same teacher Brahma to the same disciple Narad, they were collectively called 'Narad Parivrajak Upanishad'. The objective was to present a comprehensive text on the subject of the renunciate way of life.

This Upanishad is very similar to Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda tradition. It is Chapter no. 2.4 of this Book.

Updesh (teaching)/Canto 1

॥ नारदपरिव्राजकोपनिषद् ॥

॥ प्रथमोपदेशः ॥

अथ कदाचित्परिव्राजकाभरणो नारदः सर्वलोकसंचारं कुर्वन्नपूर्वपुण्यस्थलानि पुण्यतीर्थानि तीर्थीकुर्वन्नवलोक्य चित्तशुद्धिं प्राप्य निर्वैरः शान्तो दान्तः सर्वतो निर्वेदमासाद्य स्वरूपानुसंधानमनुसंधाय नियमानन्दविशेषगण्यं मुनिजनैरुपसंकीर्णं नैमिषारण्यं पुण्यस्थलमवलोक्य सरिगमपधनिससंज्ञैर्वैराग्यबोधकरैः स्वरविशेषैः प्रापञ्चिकपराङ्मुखैर्हरिकथालापैः स्थावरजङ्गमनामकैर्भगवद्भक्तिविशेषैर्नरमृगकिंपुरुषामरकिंनराप्सरो गणान्संमोहयन्नागतं ब्रह्मात्मजं भगवद्भक्तं नारदमवलोक्य द्वादशवर्षसत्रयागोपस्थिताः श्रुताध्ययनसंपन्नाः सर्वज्ञास्तपोनिष्ठापराश्च ज्ञानवैराग्यसंपन्नाः शौनकादिमहर्षयः प्रत्युत्थानं कृत्वा नत्वा यथोचितातिथ्यपूर्वकमुपवेशयित्वा स्वयं सर्वेऽप्युपविष्टा भो भगवन् ब्रह्मपुत्र कथं मुक्त्युपायोऽस्माकं वक्तव्यम् ॥१॥

atha kadācitparivrajakābharaṇo nāradaḥ sarvalokasaṁcāraṁ  
kurvannapūrvapuṇyasthalāni puṇyatīrthāni tīrthīkurvannavalokya  
cittaśuddhiṁ prāpya nirvairāḥ śānto dāntaḥ sarvato  
nirvedamāsādyā svarūpānusandhānamanusandhaya  
niyamānandaviśeṣagaṇyaṁ munijanairupasaṁkīrṇaṁ  
naimiṣāraṇyaṁ puṇyasthalamavalokya sarigamapadhanisa  
saṁjñairvairāgyabodhakaraiḥ svaraviśeṣaiḥ prāpañcika  
parāṇmukhāirharikathālāpaiḥ sthāvarajaṅgamanāmakai  
rbhagavadbhaktiviśeṣairnaramṛgakiṁpuruṣāmarakiṁnara  
apsarogaṇānsaṁmohayannāgataṁ brahmātmajaṁ bhagavadbhaktaṁ  
nāradamavalokya dvādaśavarṣasatrayāgopasthitāḥ  
śrutādhyayanasaṁpannāḥ sarvajñāstaponiṣṭhāparāśca  
jñānavairāgyasaṁpannāḥ śaunakādimaharṣayaḥ  
pratyutthānaṁ kṛtvā natvā yathocitātithyapūrvakamupaveśayitvā  
svayaṁ sarve'pyupaviṣṭā bho bhagavan brahmaputra katham  
muktyupāyo'smākaṁ vaktavyam // 1 //

1. Once sage Narad<sup>1</sup>, who is regarded as the most exalted in the fraternity of Parivrajaks (also known as Sanyasis; those who have taken the strict vow of renunciation and lead a life of total dispassion and detachment from everything and everyone in this material world; those who lead a serene life of a reclusive monk or hermit), went to all the holy pilgrim sites during his constant travel. All these places became more holy and purer as a result of his stepping foot on them.

This visit helped the godly sage to clean all impurities that might have tainted his mind, and consequentially obtained complete peace and tranquillity of the mind by having a divine sight of these holy places.

The sage was very rested and tranquil; he had all the sense organs completely under control and epitomised self restraint; he was completely renounced and dispassionate towards all. He had no animosity or malice towards anyone. Being in such a state of mind, he was absorbed in self contemplation and constantly meditating upon the truth about the 'self'.

During the course of his travels he came to a place called Naimisharanya. This holy pilgrim site is especially endowed with auspiciousness and the ability to bestow exceptional bliss and happiness when one lives a duly restrained and religious life here. Numerous sages, seers, hermits and ascetics used to live there.

The divine sage Narad had a holy view of this place where the soothing and soulful sound of the Indian lute, a sound that created an atmosphere of auspiciousness and spirituality filled with renunciation and detachment, wafted in the air as various sages and others sang hymns and offered sacrifices with Vedic Mantras using this musical instrument. Narad joined the celebratory atmosphere and religious fervour, deriving immense comfort and spiritual pleasure by listening to divine songs sung by others and himself singing the glories of the Lord to the accompaniment of the sweet music of the lute. He did not talk of any worldly issues. The entire place and its surroundings, consisting of both the movable as well as the immovable entities, resonated with his melodious singing, and all the creatures remained submerged in spiritual ecstasy and a sense of immense exhilaration arising from it. It was a Utopian situation of an eclectic spiritual dimension.

Narad's divine songs, soaked in the nectar of devotion and submission to the supreme Lord, attracted all creatures alike, whether they were humans, animals, gods, Kinnars (a higher form of semi-god), Gandharvas (musicians of the gods) or Apsaras (celestial dancers in the court of Indra, the king of gods). They danced and swayed in blissful happiness and ecstasy of the highest order.

At that time, a special religious festival of a sacrifice extending for twelve long years was being organised there (and this explained the celebrations and festive environment). Great Gods, renowned sages and seers as well as the divine sages Shaunak and others had gathered on the occasion to participate. When they saw the great sage Narad amidst them they felt very glad and extended a very warm and heartiest welcome to him by duly paying their obeisance to him and honouring him. They collectively bowed at his august feet and gave him a high seat of honour.

All the assembled sages and seers took their respective seats, and when all were duly seated the great sage Shaunak<sup>2</sup> joined them to ask Narad—‘Oh great sage! What is the way to find freedom and deliverance from the fetters pertaining to this world? How can one find emancipation and salvation? Please be kind to enlighten us about it.’ (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Sage *Narad*—The celestial sage Narad is said to be a manifestation of the Supreme Being's Mana (mind and its thoughts, intentions, hopes, desires and wishes, as well as the heart and its emotions and sentiments). The Supreme Being implements his wishes and expresses his intentions and wishes by making Narad his spokesperson. Purans list uncountable instances when Narad has approached people—both the good and righteous as well as the demonic and unrighteous ones—to tell them the path best suited to them, and the wise ones treated this advice as the Lord's wish while the unwise ones still benefited from it because Narad's intention was always to turn a living being away from his sinful ways and lead him towards the good.

Since he is a personified Mana, he is as fickle, unstable and transient as the Mana—never staying at one place for more than a fleeting moment, always roaming here and there in the entire creation, having nothing to stop his path as he could go anywhere he wished. And the remarkable thing is that he was never unwelcome anywhere—even the demons welcomed him with the same respect as did the Gods.

It is believed that he is born in each Kalpa to carry out the wishes of the Supreme Being. [1 Kalpa is equivalent to 4.32 billion human years.] He was a Gandharva (a semi-God who is a celestial musician) named Upbarhan in the previous Kalpa. He was physically very charming and an expert musician. Once he showed his amorous intentions towards Urvashi, a celestial dancer, in the presence of Brahma the creator where he was supposed to show exemplary restraint, and this overt show of lust resulted in his being cursed by Brahma that he would become fallen and take birth in the mortal world as a Shudra (a low caste). So, he was born from a maid servant of

low caste working as a devoted servant of a learned Brahmin. Under the constant companion of this great Brahmin, Narad developed noble and auspicious virtues in him even though he was a mere child of five years. He was very modest, devoted, pious, noble hearted and diligent.

Since he had the Lord's genes in him, his inclinations were more inclined towards the Spirit than the worldly charms of material sense objects which he detested from childhood. As luck would have it, once some wondering mendicants came to spend the four-month period of the rainy season in the hermitage of this Brahmin. Narad served them with great devotion. Impressed by his service and having some inner vision of his high spiritual stature and the spark of divinity that was lying hidden in him waiting for an opportune moment to leap up and shine through, they blessed him, taught him meditation and contemplation, besides initiating the child into the path of the Lord.

Thus, the dormant fire of renunciation and spiritual awareness was immediately ignited in Narad's little heart and he wished to take to Sanyas (a renunciate's life marked by constant wandering as a mendicant in search of the supreme bliss and Truth), but he did not wish to hurt his mother's emotions. But the Lord had other plans for him, and soon his wish was fulfilled when his loving mother died of snake bite while milking a cow. Instead of grieving at such a loss in human terms, the child Narad felt happy as if the last fetter was broken and he was liberated from worldly obligations.

He immediately headed north towards the mighty Himalaya Mountains to do severe Tapa (penance and austerity) to attain access to the Supreme Being. The little one walked on and on, and finally he was so tired and exhausted that when he saw a cool lake he drank water, ate fruits that he found there, and sat under the shadow of a tree and became lost in meditation. Lord Vishnu revealed himself in his four-arm form in his heart, but Narad was so thrilled and excited with this divine vision that he wished to see the Lord in practical terms with his physical eyes rather than the subtle eyes while he was in deep meditation. But as soon as he opened the eyes, the Lord vanished. Most sorry and overwhelmed with this loss, the child began to cry bitterly. Then a cosmic formless reverberating voice said—'Oh son! Your penance is accepted, and I do love you. Though I bless you with an eternal life and that your memory of me would never be erased, but you would not be able to see me with physical eyes in this world. So go back to the world and carry out my divine mandate for me. Become my messenger and go preach the path of my devotion and holy name to this world so that other unfortunate creatures also can get liberation and deliverance from the fetters in which they have bound themselves with no one to show them an easy and practical way out of their predicaments. Go and preach my message to such people in every corner of the earth; go and preach my devotion and let them have faith in my holy name. Your salvation would come naturally and automatically to you as an unasked reward.'

Narad turned back with this divine mandate of the Lord to be carried out just like the great Apostles of Lord Jesus Christ had went, on the Lord's instructions, to spread his message to the people on this earth. Henceforth, he wandered in the entire creation like a mendicant, with an Indian lute upon which he sang the Lord's glories and his divine name, spreading the divine message of the Lord's mercy, compassion, benevolence and love everywhere, attempting to turn everyone towards the Lord and away from this sinful and mortal world so that each individual creature could get his spiritual liberation and deliverance. Such are the ways of great and holy saints that instead of being selfish to seek his own liberation and deliverance from the Lord as the grant of a boon and letting the rest of the world go to hell, Narad chose to sacrifice his own life, liberation and deliverance at the altar of larger good of creation and to fulfill the wish of the Lord. Of course there is another twist to this tale—the Lord does not select everyone to carry on his own divine agenda, and a soul who the Lord designates for this purpose is indeed the most favoured and lucky one—because



the Emperor chooses only those upon whom he has utmost confidence to carry out his personal task. It is just like Jesus choosing his disciples and ordaining them the task of spreading his glorious Gospel of love and salvation.

Therefore, Narad, the apostle of the Supreme Being, is the most loved disciple of the Lord, and it is evidenced by the fact that he is the only saint who has unrestricted access to the abode of the Trinity Gods (Lord Vishnu the sustainer and protector of creation, Brahma the creator and Shiva the concluder of this creation) besides every nook and corner of creation without hindrance and even without seeking any previous permission and appointment from anyone, be it a God or a Demon or anybody else. Narad's visit was always for the host's long term good, so he was always welcome and revered.

When the time came and the age of the physical body ended, he left the mortal coil like a serpent leaves its cuticle and went to heaven to sing the Lord's holy and divine name in the presence of Brahma, the old patriarch of creation. At the end of the Kalpa, at the time of Doomsday, he merged and became one with Brahma, the creator.

When the new cycle of creation came into being, he was born again from the Mana (mind) of Brahma the creator after the Sankadi sages were born. That is why, in the present Kalpa, Narad is called the 'Manas Putra' of Brahma, i.e. the son born out of Brahma's mental powers or his wishes. With this heritage and gene running in his blood, it is natural that he is highly respected and regarded as one of the greatest devotees of Lord Vishnu who is the Supreme Being personified. It is from the navel of Lord Vishnu that Brahma, the creator of the visible world, was born atop a divine Lotus that emerged from it while he was reclining on the bed made of the coiled body of the legendary serpent named Seshnath who floated on the surface of the celestial ocean of milk called Kshirsagar.

Narad preached renunciation of this material world and an extreme sense of faith in and complete devotion for Lord Hari (Narayan, Vishnu, the Supreme Being). But this was against the process of creation, because if everyone followed the path preached by Narad and renounced the material world then the process of propagation of the world and its inhabitant creatures along with its development would come to a naught. So, when Narad preached renunciation and detachment from this material world of sense objects that was mortal, transient and never a giver of peace and happiness to the ten thousand mental sons who were created by Daksha Prajapati (the first male from whom the rest of the human race was born and who was assigned the task by Brahma to propagate creation) in order to propagate this human race, Narad obviously annoyed him. These sons were preached by Narad and they all became mendicants, renouncing their attachment with this life and all charms of the material world along with the desire to enjoy it, gratify their sense organs and remain entangled in affairs of this world. Daksha Prajapati was exasperated and he created another set of ten thousand sons. But when Narad again played spoil-sport, Daksha cursed him that Narad would have to remain on the move always and he would not be able to stay at one place for more than two 'Gharis'. [1 Ghari = 24 minutes. In practice the term means a very short period of time; a fleeting moment as small as batting an eyelid.] As a result of this curse, Narad became an ever-wandering mendicant. But this suited the divine mandate of the Lord—for now Narad was forced to keep on the move and reach newer corners of the worldly and celestial realm to preach the Lord's message amongst the mortal creatures on earth and the Gods and Spirits in the heaven.

It is believed that Narad is immortal and is symbolic of the stupendous powers of a man's mind. The mind is ever-wandering like Narad, and the subtle message in the entire lore is that one should tame this restless mind and train it to turn away from this mortal engrossing material world and instead turn towards the Lord for finding permanent liberation and deliverance from this world. A wise mind would teach (preach) the aspirant about the futility of pursuing this artificial world, and instead

seek ways of finding the Truth that gives eternity and brings to an end the endless litany of miseries and horrors, perplexities and confusions, restlessness and agitations that are invariably associated with un-truth, delusions and ignorance.

Narad was the most erudite and scholarly devotee of the Lord. No other sage or saint could match him in his scholarly acumen and profundity of wisdom (ref. Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 7, section 1, verse no. 2). Narad is also credited with the composition of the great Sutra (formula or key) called 'Narad Bhakti Sutra' which defines the eclectic principles and characteristics of the spiritual practice called Bhakti which is to have a profound and exemplary degree of devotion for and surrender to the Supreme Being. Narad himself epitomizes Bhakti at its most refined and developed form.

<sup>2</sup>Sage *Shaunak*— Sage Shaunak was a wise and learned sage and derived his name after his father sage Shunak. He is regarded as an incarnation of Indra, the king of Gods. He was an expert on the Vedas, especially the Rik/Rig Veda and the majority of his works revolve around this particular Veda. They are known as 'Anukramanika' (indices). His magnum opus is the 'Brihad-devta' which deals with the deities of the Vedas. He had a large following of disciples, the chief being Ashwalyaana. He appears in many ancient scriptures such as Shatpath Brahmin, 13/5/3/5; Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 2/5/20; Chandogya Upanishad, 1/9/3; Mundak Upanishad, 1/1/3; Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad, 4/7.

The Par Brahm Upanishad, which is the twentieth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, was revealed to sage Shaunak by sage Pippalaad.

The Sita Upanishad, which is the ninth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, mentions sage Shaunak in its verse no. 6 as the great ancient sage who had revealed the three esoteric mystical forms of Sita, the divine consort of Lord Ram. Sita was actually a personified form of the all-powerful cosmic 'Shakti' of Brahm. this Shakti represented the almighty energy, dynamism and powers of the Supreme Being that was revealed both at the macrocosmic as well as the microcosmic level of creation. These three forms of Sita have been revealed by the sage in his composition called 'Shaunak Tantra'. This is a text used to worship Sita as a Shakti or divine Goddess using her Beej Mantra in mystical forms of worship.]

इत्युक्तस्तान् स होवाच नारदः सत्कुलभवोपनीतः सम्यगुपनयनपूर्वकं चतुश्चत्वारिंशत्संकारसंपन्नः  
स्वाभिमतैकगुरुसमीपे स्वशाखाध्ययनपूर्वकं सर्वविद्याभ्यासं कृत्वा द्वादशवर्षशुश्रूषापूर्वकं ब्रह्मचर्यं  
पञ्चविंशतिवत्सरं गार्हस्थ्यं पञ्चविंशतिवत्सरं वानप्रस्थाश्रमं तद्विधिवत्क्रमान्निर्वर्त्य चतुर्विधब्रह्मचर्यं षड्विधं  
गार्हस्थ्यं चतुर्विधं वानप्रस्थधर्मं सम्यगभ्यस्य तदुचितं कर्म सर्वं निर्वर्त्य साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नः  
सर्वसंसारोपरि मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिर्यथाशानिवृत्तस्तथा वासनैषणोपर्यपि निर्वैरः शान्तो दान्तः सन्यासी  
परमहंसाश्रमेणास्खलितस्वस्वरूपध्यानेन देहत्यागं करोति स मुक्तो भवति स मुक्तो भवतीत्युपनिषत्  
॥२॥

ityuktastānsa hovāca nāradaḥ  
satkulabhavopanītaḥ samyagupanayanapūrvakaṁ catuścatvāriṁśat  
saṁskārasaṁpannaḥ svābhimataikagurusamīpe svaśākhādhyayana  
pūrvakaṁ sarvavidyābhyāsaṁ kṛtvā dvādaśavarṣaśūśrūṣā  
pūrvakaṁ brahmacaryaṁ pañcaviṁśativatsaraṁ gārhasṭhyaṁ  
pañcaviṁśativatsaraṁ vānaprasthāśramaṁ tadvidhivatkrāmānnirvartya  
caturvidhabrahmacaryaṁ ṣaḍvidhaṁ gārhasṭhyaṁ caturvidhaṁ  
vānaprasthadharmaṁ samyagabhyasya taducitaṁ karma sarvaṁ nirvartya  
sādhana catuṣṭayasāpannaḥ sarvasaṁsāropari manovākkāya  
karmabhiryathāśānivr̥ttastathā vāsanaiṣaṇoparyapi nirvairāḥ

śānto dāntaḥ samnyāsī paramahaṃsāśrameṇāskhalitasvasvarūpa  
dhyānena dehatyāgaṃ karoti sa mukto bhavati sa mukto bhavatītyupaniṣat //  
2 //

2. The world famous sage Narad replied—‘If a man is born in a high and noble clan but still has not been formally initiated by the investiture ceremony of the sacred thread (called Upnayan), then first this must be done. All the forty-four consecration ceremonies and purification rites should be properly done. Then he should approach a Guru (a learned teacher) in his hermitage as his disciple or student.

There, he should please the Guru with his devoted and selfless service on the one hand, and diligently start a systemic study of the branch of the Vedas assigned to him. He should then progress in his studies, and gradually study all the branches and all the scriptures while serving the Guru for twelve years. During this time he should strictly observe the tenets of Brahmacharya. [This refers to a life of observation of strict self-discipline and self-control. It entails strict control of all the sense organs and their natural impulses. This ensures that the student is not only able to concentrate his mind and energy on his studies but also to preserve the vital energy of the body and the mind, as well as inculcate noble virtues during these formative years of his life.]

After this, he should lead a Grishastha’s (householder’s) life for the next twenty-five years, followed by another twenty-five years as a Vaanprastha. [The Vaanprastha is a person who leaves the house and literally heads for the forest, but in practice it entails visiting all the pilgrim sites, remaining aloof from worldly attachments, distancing one-self from all household affairs, and spending time in peace, study and contemplation. This is a preparatory stage for the fourth stage of Sanyas which is life of complete severance of all worldly ties.]

Wise people assert that Brahmacharya Ashram is of four types, Grishastha Ashram of six types, and Vaanprastha Ashram of four types. [The word ‘Ashram’ refers to a phase or period of life.] One should be loyal to his Ashram, i.e. he should faithfully follow the codes of conduct, do all the required deeds diligently and practice the sanctified way of life as designated for each of these three phases in his life.

After having led a fruitful and auspicious life according to traditional norms and sanctified by the scriptures, he should rise above from this world of material objects, i.e. he should become detached from and dispassionate towards this material world of sense objects, its accompanying pleasures and comforts, its charms and temptations, its joys and sufferings, and its entanglements and delusions. He should abandon all sorts of desires, hopes and expectations from his conscience, and free his mind, speech, deeds and body from them. He should completely overcome all sorts of Vasanas, or passions, yearnings, greed and wants. [That is, he must not allow his mind to harbour any desire or hope, nor expect anything from the body and the world. He should not spend his precious energy and time in pursuing this material world, and gratification of the self and the body. He should not expect that his body would give him support in his old days, or help him enjoy the pleasures and comforts of the world, and neither should he employ the body in this pursuit. He should not do deeds with expectation of a reward or gain something or to fulfil some aspirations, but only do them selflessly as an ordained duty done to serve the Lord and his extended form in the shape of this world or creation. He should use his speech not to gain some benefit from it, such as gaining name and fame as a scholar or wise person, but to help others and to serve the noble cause of the Lord. He should not harbour any passions and worldly desires whatsoever because they lead to getting tied down in shackles.]

He should forsake all ill-wills and animosities with everyone, and exercise the greatest of self-control over his sense organs. Having thus prepared himself properly and wisely, he should enter the next and final stage of life called the Sanyas Ashram. [This is a life of total renunciation of all involvement with this world. It entails complete detachment and severance of ties with the world.]

Having taken to this auspicious path of Sanyas, an aspirant should spend his precious time in self contemplation and meditating upon the Absolute Truth about the pure conscious eternal and imperishable 'self'. A person who leaves his mortal body while thus remaining engrossed in this constant contemplation and meditation is able to attain Mukti. That is, he obtains liberation and deliverance from the mortal gross body as well as from this entrapping and deluding world of transmigration permanently.

Verily, this is what this Upanishad affirms. This is its great teaching (2).

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### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 2

॥ द्वितीयोपदेशः ॥

अथ हैनं भगवन्तं नारदं सर्वे शौनकादयः पप्रच्छुर्भो भगवन् संन्यासविधिं नो ब्रूहीति तानवलोक्य नारदस्तत्स्वरूपं सर्वं पितामहमुखेनैव ज्ञातुमुचितमित्युक्त्वा सत्रयागपूर्त्यनन्तरं तैः सह सत्यलोकं गत्वा विधिवद्ब्रह्मनिष्ठावरं परमेष्ठिनं नत्वा स्तुत्वा यथोचितं तदाज्ञया तैः सहोपविश्व नारदः पितामहमुवाच गुरुस्त्वं जनकस्त्वं सर्वविद्यारहस्यज्ञः सर्वज्ञस्त्वमतो मतो मदिष्टं रहस्यमेकं वक्तव्यं त्वद्विना मदभिमतरहस्यं वक्तुं कः समर्थः । किमिति चेत् पारिव्राज्यस्वरूपक्रमं नो ब्रूहीति नारदेन प्रार्थितः परमेष्ठी सर्वतः सर्वानवलोक्य मुहूर्तमात्रं समाधिनिष्ठो भूत्वा संसारार्तिनिवृत्त्यन्वेषण इति निश्चित्य नारदमवलोक्य तमाह पितामहः । पुरा मत्पुत्र पुरुषसूक्तोपनिषद्ग्रहस्यप्रकारं निरतिशयाकारावलम्बिना विराट्पुरुषेणोपदिष्टं रहस्यं ते विविच्योच्यते तत्क्रममतिरहस्यं बाढमवहितो भूत्वा श्रूयताम् ।

भो नारद विधिवादादानुपनीतोपनयनानन्तरं तत्सत्कुलप्रसूतः पितृमातृविधेयः पितृसमीपादन्यत्र सत्संप्रदायस्थं श्रद्धावन्तं सत्कुलभवं श्रोत्रियं शास्त्रवात्सल्यं गुणवंतमकुटिलं सद्गुरुमासाद्य नत्वा यथापयोगशुश्रूषापूर्वकं स्वाभिमतं विज्ञाप्य द्वादशवर्षसेवापुरःसरं सर्वविद्याभ्यासं कृत्वा तदनुज्ञया स्वकुलानुरूपामभिमतकन्यां विवाह्य पञ्चविंशतिवत्सरं गुरुकुलवासं कृत्वाथ गुर्वनुज्ञया गृहस्थोचितकर्म कुर्वन्द्वाब्राह्मण्यनिवृत्तिमेत्य स्ववंशवृद्धिकामः पुत्रमेकमासाद्य गार्हस्थ्योचितपञ्चविंशतिवत्सरं तीर्त्वा ततः पञ्चविंशतिवत्सरपर्यन्तं त्रिषवणमुदकस्पर्शनपूर्वकं चतुर्थकालमेकवारमाहारमाहरन्नयमेक एव वनस्थो भूत्वा पुरग्रामप्राक्तनसंचारं विहाय निकिर विरहिततदाश्रितकर्मोचितकृत्यं दृष्टश्रवणविषयवैतृण्यमेत्य चत्वारिंशत्संस्कारसंपन्नः सर्वतो विरक्तश्चित्तशुद्धिमेत्याशासूयेर्ष्याहंकारं दग्ध्वा साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नः संन्यस्तुमर्हतीत्युपनिषत् ॥१॥

atha hainam bhagavantam nāradam sarve śaunakādayaḥ  
paprachchurbho bhagavansaṁnyāsavidhiṁ no brūhīti  
tānavalokya nāradastatsvarūpaṁ sarvaṁ pitāmahamukhenaiva

jñātumucitamityuktvā satrayāgapūrtyanantaram taiḥ saha  
 satyalokaṃ gatvā vidhivadbrahmaniṣṭhāparam parameṣṭhinam  
 natvā stutvā yathocitam tadājñayā taiḥ sahopaviśya  
 nāradaḥ pitāmahamuvāca gurustvam janakastvam sarvavidyā  
 rahasajñāḥ sarvajñastvamato matto madiṣṭam rahasyamekaṃ  
 vaktavyam tvadvinā madabhimatarahasyam vaktum kaḥ samarthaḥ /  
 kimiticetpārivrājyasvarūpakramam no brūhīti nāradena  
 prārthitaḥ parameṣṭhi sarvataḥ sarvānavalokya muhūrtamātram  
 samādhiniṣṭho bhūtvā saṃsārātinivṛtyanveṣaṇa iti  
 niścitya nāradamavalokya tamāha pitāmahaḥ /  
 purā matputra puruṣasūktopaniṣadrahasyaprakāram  
 niratiśayākārāvalambinā virāṭpuruṣeṇopadiṣṭam rahasyam  
 te vivicyocyate tatkrāmamatirahasyam bāḍhamavahito bhūtvā  
 śrūyatām /  
 bho nārada vidhivadādāvanupanītopanayānantaram  
 tatsatkulaprasūtaḥ pitṛmātrvidheyāḥ pitṛsamīpādanyatra  
 satsaṃpradāyasthaṃ śraddhāvantam satkulabhavam śrotriyaṃ  
 śāstravātsalyam guṇavantamakuṭilam sadgurumāsādyā natvā  
 yathopayogaśuśrūṣāpūrvakaṃ svābhimataṃ vijñāpya  
 dvādaśavarṣasevāpuraḥsaram sarvavidyābhyāsam kṛtvā  
 tadanujñayā svakulānurūpāmabhimatakanyām vivāhya  
 pañcaviṃśativatsaram gurukulavāsam kṛtvātha gurvanujñayā  
 gr̥hasthokitakarma kurvandaubrāhmaṇyanivṛttimetya  
 svavaṃśavṛddhikāmaḥ putramekamāsādyā gārhashthyocita  
 pañcaviṃśativatsaram tīrtvā tataḥ pañcacviṃśativatsaraparyantaṃ  
 triṣaṇamudakasparśanapūrvakaṃ caturthakālamekavāramāhāra  
 māharannayameka eva vanastho bhūtvā puragrāmaprāktanasañcāram  
 vihāya nikāravirahitatadāśritakarmocitakṛtyaṃ nirvartya  
 dr̥ṣṭaśraṇaṇaviśayavaitṛṣṇyametya catvāriṃśatsaṃkāra  
 saṃpannaḥ sarvato viraktaścittaśuddhimetyāśāsūyersyāhaṅkāram  
 dagdhvā sādhanacatuṣṭayasampannaḥ saṃnyastumarhatītyupaniṣat // 1 //

1. After that, once again sage Shaunak and others requested the divine sage Narad—‘Oh Lord! Please tell us the full detail of what constitutes the concept of Sanyas (i.e. please elaborate on a life of total and exemplary renunciation and dispassion when one has no attachment for anything in this world).’

Sage Narad looked at them with affection and benevolence, and began his preaching—‘Oh great sages! It would be proper to hear about Sanyas in a comprehensive way from Brahma, the great grandfather of creation.’

So the exalted sages waited for the completion of the sacrifice, and then they accompanied sage Narad to the divine abode of Brahma in the heaven. There, meditating upon the supreme Brahm (the Supreme Being) and remembering the eclectic glories of the Lord in their hearts, the congregation of sages bowed before Brahma the creator most reverentially and prayed. Pleased, Brahma requested them to be appropriately seated.

Sage Narad took the initiative and humbly submitted before Brahma—‘Oh Brahma! You are the Guru (teacher, guide and advisor) as well as a father for all of us. You are omniscient and all-knowing; you are well-versed in all the Vidyas (composite body of knowledge) that exist in this creation. So be kind to reveal the

secret of something which we are very eager to know. There is no one in this creation who is better qualified and more competent than you who can satisfy our quest.

If you are ready to show your benevolence and grace upon us then please first tell us about the truthful identity, form and nature of a Parivrajak (a spiritual aspirant who has taken the vows of Sanyas, and is very sincere and diligent about it) along with the ethics, codes of conduct and other laws and regulations that govern this form of exalted life.'

When Narad made this request, Brahma closed his eyes for two 'Gharis' (literally a period of 2 x 24 minutes = 48 minutes because 1 Ghari equals 24 minutes, but here implying 'for some time') and began meditating to search for an appropriate answer that can show the path or way which would help a creature to find liberation and deliverance from the uncountable miseries, pains and torments associated with this mortal world of an endless cycle of birth and death, a world which traps a creature in its vice-like grip.

He replied—'Oh Narad! In some ancient time, the Viraat Purush, the all-pervading cosmic form of the Supreme Being who is the most sublime, divine, enigmatic and exalted Lord of creation, who is honoured and adored by and paid obeisance to in the 'Purush Sukta' (which is hymn of the Veda dedicated to the Viraat Purush) as well as the Upanishads, had preached some divine knowledge to me at the beginning of creation. I shall now divulge or reveal that most sublime and divine secret knowledge before you all.

The identity, form, nature and way of life of a Parivrajak are most mysterious, exquisite and enigmatic, besides being unique, sublime and honourable. Listen about it with great attention. If a child is born in a high clan and is very obedient towards his parents, but has not undergone the formal investiture ceremony in which he is given the sacred thread and initiated (i.e. baptised) formally, then the first thing to do or the first step to implement is to formally initiate him by the ceremony of the sacred thread.

Then the boy should leave his parental home and go to reside with a wise and learned Guru (teacher) in the latter's Ashram (hermitage). The teacher must be wise, erudite and competent besides having great faith in, devotion for and knowledge of the Vedic scriptures. The aspirant should humbly pray to the Guru and submit himself before him (or surrender himself to him in the search of true knowledge). [That is, the disciple should place his all-round well being and the future prospects of his life into the able hands of his Guru like one relies upon one's parents.]

The disciple must strictly follow the tenets as prescribed for a Brahmachari (a celibate person who shows exemplary self-restraint over his sense organs) for the next twelve years while serving the Guru selflessly and faithfully as well as devoting his entire energy, time and attention in studying all the scriptures and gaining knowledge. [This is the first phase of life.]

At the end of this period and after having acquired all knowledge to the best of his ability (i.e. after having completed his education), he should take permission from his Guru and marry an appropriate girl. Thereafter he should live life as a householder for the next twenty-five years. During this phase of life he should follow tradition to produce sons to carry forward his family line. [This is the second phase of life.]

At the end of this period he should step on the next (third) phase of life as a Vaanprastha (which is the beginning of life of renunciation and detachment; refer Canto 1, verse no. 2). This phase should ideally last for the next twenty-five years. During this period he should take a purifying bath three times of the day—at dawn, noon and twilight hours, and eat once a day—before sunset. He is expected to forsake

well-tread paths passing through villages and towns known to him, and instead roam incognito and go that way where no one can recognise him. He should roam alone in the forest. [Actually the word Vaanprastha means someone who heads for the forest. But it should not be taken too literally as it is not practical for a modern man to go to the forest. The intention is to go out of the house unrecognised and move alone freely in the country, visiting pilgrim sites and other holy places that help the middle-aged man to live a carefree life of no worries and encumbrances. This is a virtual vacation for him that helps to rejuvenate his soul and body.]

He should eat coarse meals prepared from whatever grain of rice he can pick up from un-cultivated fields. [Such rice is grown naturally near ponds or where the field is submerged in water.] He should abstain from all the charms of the visible world of material sense objects as well as all forms of enchanting sounds (such as music, songs) or pleasing words (such as praises that stoke his ego).

Having fully observed all the ordained forty traditional obligatory purification rites, called the various ‘Sanskars’, during his life time, he should now calm down his Chitta (sub-conscious) and ensure its uniform purity and holiness. He should abandon all sorts of hopes, desires, aspirations and expectations as well as all forms of jealousy, malice, animosity and ill-will towards all. On the contrary, he should inculcate the four-fold noble virtues for his spiritual welfare, called the ‘Saadhan Chastusthaaya’. [There are said to be four Saadhans of Vedanta, and they are called the ‘Saadhan Chastusthaaya’. These four spiritual disciplines of Vedanta are the indispensable tools that help the aspirant to reach his spiritual objective and fully benefit from the teaching of Vedanta; without them it is not possible for one to truly understand or implement the teachings of Vedanta. These four Saadhans or means for obtaining success in Vedanta are the following—(i) ‘Vivek’ or having the power to discriminate between the right and the wrong; (ii) ‘Vairagya’ or having a high degree of renunciation; (iii) ‘Sham-dishtak’ or having a uniform view of things in this world leading to equanimity, peace, quietude and serenity; and (iv) ‘Mumukshu’ or having a strong desire for Moksha, which is final liberation and deliverance of the soul.]

When the aspirant has fulfilled these criteria, he finally becomes eligible to accept the vows of Sanyas (1).

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### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 3

॥ तृतीयोपदेशः ॥

अथ हैनं नारदः पितामहं पप्रच्छ भगवन् केन संन्यासाधिकारी वेत्येवमादौ संन्यासाधिकारिणं निरूप्य पश्चात्संन्यासविधिरुच्यते अवहितः शृणु । अथ षण्ढः पतितोऽङ्गविकलः स्त्रैणो बधिरोऽर्भको मूकः पाषण्डश्चक्री लिङ्गी वैखानसहरद्विजौ भृतकाध्यापकः शिपिविष्टोऽनग्निको वैराग्यवन्तोऽप्येते न संन्यासार्हाः संन्यस्ता यद्यपि महावाक्योपदेशेनाधिकारिणः पूर्वसंन्यासी परमहंसाधिकारी ॥१॥

atha hainaṃ nāradaḥ pitāmahaṃ papraccha bhagavankena  
 saṃnyāsādhikārī vetyevamādaḥ saṃnyāsādhikāriṇaṃ  
 nirūpya paścātsaṃnyāsavidhirucyate avahitaḥ śrṇu /  
 atha ṣaṇḍaḥ patito'ṅgavikalaḥ straiṇo badhiro'rbhako  
 mūkaḥ pāṣaṇḍāścakrī liṅgī vaikhānasaharadvijau  
 bhṛtakādhyāpakaḥ śipiviṣṭo'nagniko vairāgyavanto'pyete  
 na saṃnyāsārhaḥ saṃnyastā yadyapi  
 mahāvākyopadeśenādhikāriṇaḥ pūrvasaṃnyāsī paramahaṃsādhikārī // 1 //

1. The celestial sage Narad asked Brahma once again—‘Lord! Who can take the vows of Sanyas and what are the eligible criteria for it?’

Brahma answered in detail as follows—‘Let us first explain who is eligible for taking Sanyas, and then we shall throw light on the sanctified due process of doing so. Listen carefully.

The following persons are not eligible to take to the path of formal Sanyas inspite of their being detached from this world and having renounced it—an impotent person, a fallen or lowly person (who has not lived up to the standard of life expected of him as a Brahmachari (i.e. while he was a student) or as a Grihastha (i.e. while he was a householder), a physically deformed person or one who has some part of the body severed, a person who is excessively lustful, passionate or promiscuous, a person who is either deaf or dumb, a person who is still a child or very young, a person who is crooked, deceitful and an impostor, a person who indulges in evil conspiracies, is scheming and cunning, a person who is more interested in wearing external signs and robes (to show-off his religious inclinations in the hope of getting false praise and gathering admirers around him) rather than sincerely inculcating the sublime and noble virtues of Sanyas internally, a person who is still in the third phase of life as a Vaanprastha (as described in Canto 2), a person who is a devotee of Lord Shiva, a person who is a paid teacher and accepts money or other benefits for imparting knowledge, a person who suffers from leprosy or other congenital or contagious diseases, and a person who does not perform the fire sacrifice or does not worship the sacred fire. [Refer verse nos. 3-4 below; it’s almost a repetition of these restrictions.]

Even if they have adopted the path of Sanyas, they still are not eligible to accept the teaching of the Maha Vakyas or the great sayings of the Vedas.

Only those who had internally inculcated the sublime and grand virtues of Sanyas even while they were leading the earlier phases as a Brahmachari (a student in the hermitage of a teacher) or as a Grihastha (a householder) are indeed the ones who are actually eligible to accept the path of Sanyas. [The implication is obvious here. The eclectic and grand virtues of renunciation and detachment from this material world and its false and ensnaring charms are qualities that are cultivated internally, and mere external show of being a Sanyasi (a noun used for a person who has taken the stern vows of Sanyas or renunciation and detachment from anything related with this world) would lead a man nowhere. Rather, it would only ruin him and cause him ridicule and pain which he could have well avoided if he did not take the vows of Sanyas at all. So, it boils down to the fact that even while a man may lead a normal life in this world, going about his normal life in a routine manner, he may still be highly spiritually evolved and is as good as a full-fledged and honest Sanyasi when compared to another man who may have formally accepted the vows of Sanyas, even sport some external signs of being a Sanyasi, but his mind, his sub-conscious and his heart are entangled in the world which he pretends to leave behind, or he is overcome



with some physical discomfort due to some kind of deformity of the body which prevents him from finding peace and the ability to meditate and contemplate. Such a man should better not take Sanyas at all, for not only is he cheating himself and the rest of the world but is also demeaning and insulting the august institution of Sanyas.] (1).

परेणैवात्मनश्चापि परस्यैवात्मना तथा । अभयं समवाप्नोति स परिव्राडिति स्मृतिः ॥२॥

pareṇaivātmanaścāpi parasyaivātmanā tathā /  
abhayaṃ samavāpnoti sa parivrāḍiti smṛtiḥ // 2//

2. The scriptures assert that a person who is not afraid of anything (including death and any kind of harm) himself, nor causes fear or dread to others in any way whatsoever is indeed an honest and true Parivrajak (Sanyasi) (2).

षण्ढोऽथ विकलोऽप्यन्धो बालकश्चापि पातकी । पतितश्च परद्वारी वैखानसहरद्विजौ ॥३॥  
चक्री लिङ्गी च पाषण्डी शिपिविष्टोऽप्यनग्निकः । द्वित्रिवारेण संन्यस्तो भृतकाध्यापकोऽपि च । एते  
नार्हन्ति संन्यासमातुरेण विना क्रमम् ॥४॥

ṣaṇḍo'tha vikalo'pyandho bālakaścāpi pātakī /  
patitaśca paradvārī vaikhānasaharadvijau // 3 //

cakrī liṅgī ca pāṣaṇḍī śipiviṣṭo'pyanagnikah /  
dvitrivāreṇa saṃnyasto bhṛtakādhyāpako'pi ca /  
ete nārhanṭi saṃnyāsamātūreṇa vinā kramam // 4 //

3-4. None of the following categories of people are eligible to take the holy vows of Sanyas—a Shanda (an impotent person), a Vikala (a physically deformed person or one who has some part of the body severed), an Andha (a blind person), a Baalak (an immature child), a Paataki (an evil and sinful person), a Patit (a fallen or lowly person who has not lived up to the standard of life expected of him as a Brahmachari—i.e. while he was a student, or as a Grihastha—i.e. while he was a householder), a Pardwari (a person who is excessively lustful, passionate or promiscuous; a person who eyes other women), a Vaikhaanas (a sage or hermit, because such a person is deemed to be already a wise and enlightened person who has renounced the illusionary charms of the world and has sufficiently progressed on the path of spiritualism), a Har-dwij (a person who is a devotee of Lord Shiva, because such persons are again expected to have already renounced the false world), a Chakri (person who is deceitful and an impostor, a person who indulges in evil conspiracies, is scheming and cunning), a Lingi (a person who is more interested in wearing external signs and robes to show-off his religious inclinations in the hope of false praise and gathering admirers around him rather than sincerely inculcating the sublime and noble virtues of Sanyas internally), a Paakhandi (a person who is crooked, a hypocrite, pretentious and deceptive), a Shipivishto (a person who suffers from leprosy or some other congenital or contagious diseases), an Anagnik (a person who does not perform the fire sacrifice or does not worship the sacred fire), a Dwitivaaren (a person who has taken the vows of Sanyas for two or three times

previously, but each time got distracted and abandoned its vows), and a Brhit-Adhyaapak (a person who is a paid teacher and accepts money or other benefits for imparting knowledge) (3-4).

आतुरकालः कथमार्यसम्मतः । प्राणस्योत्क्रमणासन्नकालस्त्वातुरसंज्ञकः । नेतरस्त्वातुरः कालो मुक्तिमार्गप्रवर्तकः ॥५॥

āturakālaḥ kathamāryasaṁmataḥ //  
prāṇasyotkramaṇāsannakālastvāturasamjñakaḥ /  
netarastvāturaḥ kālo muktimārgapravartakaḥ // 5 //

5. [Narad asked—] ‘What is the appropriate time for taking the vows of (or being initiated as an) ‘Aatur Sanyas’?’ [The word ‘Aatur’ means one who is very eager, anxious and sincere in obtaining something. Therefore, ‘Aatur Sanyas’ refers to accepting the vows of Sanyas when the person is very eager to receive its divine benefits on an emergency basis when there is no time for long formalities, or when he can’t resist his internal urge to become a Sanyasi, i.e. a person who has accepted the vows of Sanyas, inspite of his not reaching the fourth phase of life when ordinarily one should take the vows of Sanyas. This would be clear in the following paragraphs.]

[Brahma replied—] ‘The most appropriate time for taking to ‘Aatur Sanyas’ is when the man is about to die. Aside of this, there is no other time which is proper for accepting Aatur Sanyas. In fact, if one takes Aatur Sanyas at the proper time (which can be any time in life when he has developed a profound degree of renunciation and enlightenment), then it can provide the aspirant or seeker with Mukti (liberation and deliverance; emancipation and salvation) (5).

[Note—In the context of this verse, refer also to verse nos. 10, 12-13, and 70 below of this Canto.]

आतुरेऽपि च संन्यासे तत्तन्मन्त्रपुरःसरम् । मन्त्रावृत्तिं च कृत्वैव संन्यसेद्विधिवद्बुधः ॥६॥

āture’pi ca saṁnyāse tattanmantrapuraḥsaram /  
mantrāvr̥ttiṁ ca kṛtvaiva saṁnyasedvidhivadbudhaḥ // 6 //

6. Even in such a situation (such as when death is near), a wise man should accept Aatur Sanyas with proper Mantras (i.e. he should utter the holy Mantras while being initiated as an Aatur Sanyasi; he must not rush through it) (6).

आतुरेऽपि क्रमे वापि प्रैषभेदो न कुत्रचित् । न मन्त्रं कर्मरहितं कर्म मन्त्रमपेक्षते ॥७॥

āture’pi krame vāpi praiṣabhedo na kutracit /  
na mantram karmarahitaṁ karma mantramapekṣate // 7 //

7. There is virtually no difference between the due diligent process of accepting Aatur Sanyas and normal Sanyas. All the Mantras are related to certain Karma or deed, and all the Karmas are empowered, energised and sanctified by relevant Mantras. [That is, if the Aatur Sanyas is to be made effective as an instrument for giving Mukti or

liberation and deliverance, then it must be empowered and energised and authorised by relevant Mantra. To illustrate, if we wish to light a particular electric bulb then we must click on the correct switch.] (7).

अकर्म मन्त्ररहितं नातो मन्त्रं परित्यजेत् । मन्त्रं विना कर्म कुर्याद्भस्मन्याहुतिवद्भवेत् ॥८॥

akarma mantrarahitaṁ nāto mantraṁ parityajet /  
mantraṁ vinā karma kuryādbhasmanyāhutivadbhavet // 8 //

8. In fact, no auspicious religious Karma (deed; action) would be effective and sanctified if it is not empowered and energised by the relevant Mantra. Hence, one should not be in a tearing hurry to accept Aatur Sanyas by overlooking the necessity for invoking of the relevant Mantra.

Any Karma done without invoking proper Mantra is equivalent to, and as worthless and ineffective as offering of oblations to a dead fire when it has already calmed down to form ash. [During fire sacrifices, offerings are made to the sacred fire while it is burning brilliantly, and not when it has run its course and cooled down to leave smouldering charcoal or reduced to an ash in the fire pit.] (8).

विध्युक्तकर्म संक्षेपात्संन्यासस्त्वातुरः स्मृतः । तस्मादातुरसंन्यासे मन्त्रावृत्तिविधिर्मुने ॥९॥

vidhyuktakarmasamkṣepātsaṁnyāsavāturaḥ smṛtaḥ /  
tasmādāturasaṁnyāse mantrāvṛttividhirmune // 9 //

9. Oh sage! The formal process of accepting Aatur Sanyas is deemed to be complete if one follows the due process as prescribed in the scriptures even briefly. [This is a special concession meant to save time because, as is obvious, death is near at hand and there is no time for elaborate formalities.]

Hence, it is sufficient to repeat the necessary Mantras in order to accept Aatur Sanyas (instead of undergoing the rituals and other formalities ordained for all other types of Sanyas as would be detailed in this Upanishad later on) (9).

आहिताग्निर्विरक्तश्चेद्देशान्तरगतो यदि । प्राजापत्येष्टिमप्सवेव निर्वृत्यैवाथ संन्यसेत् ॥१०॥

āhitāgnirviraktaśceddeśāntaragato yadi /  
prājāpatyeṣṭimapsveva nirvṛtyaivātha saṁnyaset // 10 //

10. If a person, who has completed all the fire sacrifices required to be done by him as a householder, has gone to a foreign land and develops Vairagya (renunciation and detachment) there, then he can take the vows of Sanyas by doing the rite of Prajapatya Ishthi<sup>1</sup> in any water body available and accept Sanyas there. [Refer verse no. 77 in this context.] (10).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *Prajapatya Ishthi* is a special fire sacrifice offered to the creator Brahma and done with a specific desire, which in this case is the desire for obtaining Mukti and Moksha—liberation and deliverance as well as emancipation and salvation. Usually the word ‘Prajapatya’ refers to the sacrifice done by a householder with the

desire of begetting a son, or for an increase in the healthy population of the territory under his domain as desired by kings and emperors. Refer verse no. 70.]

मनसा वाथ विध्युक्तमन्त्रावृत्त्याथ वा जले । श्रुत्यनुष्ठानमार्गेण कर्मानुष्ठानमेव वा । समाप्य संन्यसेद्विद्वान्नो चेत्पातित्यमाप्नुयात् ॥११॥

manasā vātha vidhyuktamantrāvr̥tṭyāthavā jale /  
śrutyanuṣṭhānamārgēṇa karmānuṣṭhānameva vā /  
samāpya saṁnyasedvidvānno cetpātityamāpnuyāt // 11 //

11. This Prajaptya sacrifice is either done mentally, or by pronouncing the relevant Mantras, or by following the detailed process as prescribed in the Vedas and involving elaborate rituals and fire sacrifice. [These options are given to the aspirant considering the fact that he is away from home and all the necessary facilities might not be available to him in a foreign land.]

A wise person should choose the option best suited to his present circumstances and follow the instructions diligently to take Sanyas, for otherwise he is falls from grace and is deemed to have violated the auspicious and sanctioned path (11).

[Note—The most important thing to note here is that the sacrifice can be done in a symbolic manner ‘mentally’. In other words, any fire sacrifice, or for that matter any endeavour, is successful only when the mind is committed to it and wholly interested in it. Otherwise, the mind would cause immense amount of distraction, and even if the physical body remains involved in doing the sacrifice, the desired fruit would not be obtained. Doing a fire sacrifice with the mind somewhere else is as good as not doing it at all. The word ‘sacrifice’ itself implies a great deal of commitment, total and honest dedication and faith, gladly undertaking sufferance and observing due diligence on the part of the aspirant in order to achieve success in some noble cause. This can happen only with the involvement of the mind. If the mind is not fully convinced on the utility of taking Sanyas, if it does not have faith and devotion in this path, if it is not fully committed to reaching the spiritual goal of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation come what may, if it is fickle and undecided—then obviously the man is bound to fail in Sanyas. This fact is asserted in the next verse.]

यदा मनसि संजातं वैतृष्ण्यं सर्ववस्तुषु । तदा संन्यासमिच्छेत पतितः स्याद्विपर्यये ॥१२॥

yadā manasi sañjātaṁ vaitṛṣṇyaṁ sarvavastuṣu /  
tadā saṁnyāsamiccheta patitaḥ syādviparyaye // 12 //

12. It is only when one develops sincere and steady dispassion and detachment from all objects of this material world, it is only when renunciation sprouts spontaneously in the inner self of an aspirant that he should desire to take the vows of Sanyas. Otherwise he would fall from the auspicious path, become disillusioned and disgraced (12).

[Note—If one decides to renounce the world in a fit of emotions such as upon the death of someone very dear to him or loss of some property, then such fleeting sense of renunciation would pass off with time and sooner or later the man would start yearning for his lost assets and comforts of the world to which he was so accustomed.

Though it might happen that out of fear or dread of being castigated in society he might remain a Sanyasi outwardly by wearing ochre clothes, but his mind and heart would be attached to this world and the charms he left behind. He would be frustrated and constantly filled with regret at having taken Sanyas in the first place, and such a situation is obviously counter-productive for his spiritual well-being. He would fall an easy prey to temptations, and would be neither here nor there. On the one hand he would have missed out on the opportunity of fulfilling his obligations to the family and society, and on the other hand the very purpose and intent of taking Sanyas, which is to find freedom from this world, would be defeated as his mind and heart would still be locked in them. Refer verse no. 77 of this Canto 3 also in this context.]

विरक्तः प्रव्रजेद्धीमान्सरक्तस्तु गृहे वसेत् । सरागो नरकं याति प्रव्रजन् हि द्विजाधमः ॥१३॥

virakṭaḥ pravrajeddhīmānsaraktastu gr̥he vaset /  
sarāgo narakam yāti pravrajanhi dvijādhamah // 13 //

13. Only a person who has developed deep, sincere, steadfast and honest sense of renunciation and detachment should take the path of Sanyas. A person who has the slightest trace of attachments to this world and family should best avoid it, and instead live in the house.

A sinful and fallen Brahmin who accepts Sanyas inspite of having latent attractions for and attachments to this world and its material charms surely goes to hell. [That is, he suffers a lot and is punished for his deceit.] (13).

यस्यैतानि सुगुप्तानि जिह्वोपस्थोदरं करः । संन्यसेदकृतोद्वाहो ब्राह्मणो ब्रह्मचर्यवान् ॥१४॥

yasyaitāni suguptāni jihvopasthodaram karah /  
saṁnyasedakṛtodvāho brāhmaṇo brahmacaryavān // 14 //

14. Only a Brahmin (or any other learned person) who has his tongue (i.e. taste and speech), the genital organs (i.e. sexual desires), the stomach (i.e. yearning for food) and limbs (i.e. hands and legs) under strict control, and one who has not married<sup>1</sup>—only such a person is eligible to take Sanyas (14).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This restriction is practical in nature. A man with a wife and family has countless obligations to fulfill. It is not possible for him to renounce the world altogether, for even if he does so he would be going against the laws of Dharma which extoll a man to lead a life fruitfully, honour all his obligations and fulfill all his commitments dutifully. Making his family members suffer by taking to Sanyas while they are not well provided for is a sin in itself, and Sanyas cannot be successful with any guilt heavy on one's mind.]

संसारमेव निःसारं दृष्ट्वा सारदिदृक्षया । प्रव्रजन्त्यकृतोद्वाहः परं वैराग्यमाश्रितः ॥१५॥

saṁsārameva niḥsāram dr̥ṣṭvā sārādīdṛkṣayā /  
pravrajantyakṛtodvāhāḥ param vairāgyamāśritāḥ // 15 //

15. Those who are wise and erudite understand the futility of this delusory world of material sense objects which is hollow and without any pith. They desire to obtain the

real essence and be acquainted with the truth of existence. Thus they accept Sanyas while still unmarried and take refuge in the eclectic way of life marked by exemplary renunciation and dispassion in order to reach their true goal in life (which is finding the ‘truth’ and liberation from the snare of falsehoods) (15).

प्रवृत्तिलक्षणं कर्म ज्ञानं संन्यासलक्षणम् । तसमाज्ज्ञानं पुरस्कृत्य संन्यसेदिह बुद्धिमान् ॥१६॥

pravṛttilakṣaṇaṁ karma jñānaṁ saṁnyāsalakṣaṇaṁ /  
tasmājjñānaṁ puraskṛtya saṁnyasediha buddhivān // 16 //

16. Desire to do deeds and getting involved in them (and expecting results from doing such deeds) is a sign of one’s natural attractions for the world and a desire to remain involved in it (because the material world necessitates the doing of deeds if one were to live in it), while having a natural and inborn virtue of wisdom and enlightenment (which tells the person of the falsehood of this world and the futility of pursuing it by getting involved in doing deeds in order to attain even a rudimentary form of success in this world, and instead inspires him to search for the real ‘truth’ and seek the path that would lead to his final liberation and deliverance from the vicious cycle of birth and death) is a sign of natural Sanyas (or natural renunciation, dispassion and detachment). [This is because when a man realises the falsehood of this material world and therefore the futility of pursuing it, when he understands that the pleasures and comforts that he gets from this world are temporary and transient by nature, when he realises that the true ‘self’ of his is not the gross body that remains involved in this world but the pure consciousness that has got nothing to do with this gross body or the equally gross world, and that true liberation and deliverance as well as true happiness and contentedness is to inculcate these virtues internally rather than searching for them in the external material world of sense objects—it is then that he develops sincere renunciation and detachment from all things worldly. When this happens, his commitment to Sanyas would be honest and true. Obviously then, he would be successful in the path of Sanyas.]

So a wise aspirant should aim at acquiring the highest level of Gyan (wisdom, erudition and enlightenment) if he wishes to enter the path of Sanyas (16).

यदा तु विदितं तत्त्वं परं ब्रह्म सनातनम् । तदैकदण्डं संगृह्य सोपवीतां शिखां त्यजेत् ॥१७॥

yadā tu viditaṁ tattvaṁ paraṁ brahma sanātanaṁ /  
tadaikadaṇḍaṁ saṁgrhya sopavitāṁ śikhāṁ tyajet // 17 //

17. [The following verse nos. 17-27 describe who is eligible to take the vows of Sanyas and become a Sanyasi—i.e. these verses outline the requirements needed by one one to successfully take to the auspicious Sanyas way of life, to be successful in keeping the stern vows of Sanyas, and to successfully attain one’s spiritual objective for which one takes to the Sanyas way of life.]

When an aspirant has become realised and enlightened in a comprehensive manner about the fundamental essence of the eternal and truthful supreme transcendental Brahm, he should then abandon his Shikha (tuft of hair worn on the top of the head)

and Yagyopavit (the sacred thread), and instead accept only one Danda (the ascetic's rod or sceptre or staff) (17).

[Note—Refer verse nos. 79, 80-82. The Shikha and the Yagyopavit are worn by all Hindus who have been formally baptised. But when one takes to Sanyas, he is expected to leave these signs of his earlier life and take up the ascetic's staff. This ascetic's staff/rod has great symbolic importance. For once, it is an indication of his superior authority over all others in the world just like a king is distinguished by his sceptre which is a sign of his authority, and a teacher holds his stick to indicate that he is in charge of his students whom he treats as his wards. Second, it is a constant reminder for him that he has renounced the world and has vowed to firmly hold on to one single 'truth' known as Brahm who accompanies him wherever he goes like his staff or rod that accompanies him everywhere. This helps him to be loyal to the path of Sanyas, and to Brahm whom he treats as the only Lord and the ultimate goal of his spiritual practices.]

परमात्मनि यो रक्तो विरक्तोऽपरमात्मनि । सर्वैषणाविनिर्मुक्तः स भैक्षं भोक्तुमर्हति ॥१८॥

paramātmāni yo rakto virakto'paramātmāni /  
sarvaiṣaṇāvinirmuktaḥ sa bhaikṣaṁ bhoktumarhati // 18 //

18. Only those aspirants who have the greatest of faith and belief in as well as devotion for the supreme Lord, and have no interest or attractions for anything other than the Lord, and an aspirant who is free from all forms of desires (such as desire to have sons—called 'Putreshna', desire for wealth and prosperity—called 'Vitteshna', and desire for fame and enjoyment of the world—called 'Lokeshna')—only such persons are eligible to take Sanyas and become a Bhikshuk (someone who accepts food by begging; it is a term usually used for a Sanyasi, who is a person who has taken the vows of Sanyas, because he has to beg for his food) (18).

पूजितो वन्दितश्चैव सुप्रसन्नो यथा भवेत् । तथा चेत्ताड्यमानस्तु तदा भवति भैक्षभुक् ॥१९॥

pūjito vanditaścaiva suprasanno yathā bhavet /  
tathā cettāḍyamānastu tadā bhavati bhaikṣabhuk // 19 //

19. A person who feels the same sense of happiness and joy when beaten by a stick as enjoyed by ordinary people when they are praised and honoured—verily, only such a person is eligible to become a Bhikshuk (i.e. a Sanyasi who has to depend upon begging for his food) (19).

अहमेवाक्षरं ब्रह्म वासुदेवाख्यमद्वयम् । इति भावो ध्रुवो यस्य तदा भवति भैक्षभुक् ॥२०॥

ahamevākṣaraṁ brahma vāsudevākhyamadvayam /  
iti bhāvo dhruvo yasya tadā bhavati bhaikṣabhuk // 20 //

20. An aspirant who is firmly convinced that he is the eternal and imperishable supreme Brahm, who is also known by the name Vasudeo (which is one of the

numerous names of Lord Vishnu), personified—verily, only such a man is eligible to become a Bhikshuk (20).

यस्मिन्शान्तिः शमः शौचं सत्यं संतोष आर्जवम् । अकिञ्चनमदम्भश्च स कैवल्यश्रमे वसेत् ॥२१॥

yasmiñśāntiḥ śamaḥ śaucaṁ satyaṁ santoṣa ārjavam /  
akiñcanamadambhaśca sa kaivalyāśrame vaset // 21 //

21. An aspirant who inherently has a preponderance of the eclectic noble virtues of Shanti (peacefulness and tranquillity), Sham (self control), Dam (suppression of evil tendencies), Shaucha (cleanliness and purity), Satya (truthfulness), Santosh (contentedness), Saraltaa (simplicity and humility), and Aparigraha (renunciation and giving away of superfluous wealth; non-accumulation), and who has no deceit and cunning in his nature—verily, it is he who is eligible to enter ‘Kaivalya Ashram’. That is, he is eligible to take up the vows of Sanyas which is unique and the only one of its kind (‘Kaivalya’) path which leads to final liberation and deliverance of his soul. [Refer Canto 4, verse nos. 10-12.] (21).

[Note—The word Kaivalya means one of its only kind; matchless, unparalleled and unique. It also refers to the state of the mind when it is steady and undistracted. A person who has taken the path of Sanyas is expected to be exemplarily calm, serene, quiet, peaceful, rested and steady. He is to remain concentrated on one entity that is the Absolute Truth in creation, and this means that he focuses his attention on the pure consciousness that is his ‘truthful self’. He has only one aim left in life—and that is to seek this Truth and attain Mukti (spiritual liberation and deliverance) which is consequent to realisation of this Truth. Therefore, he should be steadfast and unfaltering on his path of Sanyas. In effect, he remains in a perpetual state of Samadhi, a state of existence marked by total detachment from this material world and all that is happening around the aspirant’s gross body. In fact, such a man is not even aware of his own body and what it does or how it suffers. This is tantamount to be meditative and contemplative on a permanent basis.]

यदा न कुरुते भावं सर्वभूतेषु पापकम् । कर्मणा मनसा वाचा तदा भवति भैक्षभुक् ॥२२॥

yadā na kurute bhāvaṁ sarvabhūteṣu pāpakam /  
karmanā manasā vācā tadā bhavati bhaikṣabhuk // 22 //

22. A person who keeps no ill-feeling or harbours no evil thoughts for anyone, who does not speak or utter anything that harms others or cause them pain in any way, and who never does anything or takes any action with ulterior motives of causing harm to others in any form—verily, only such a man with purity of mind and thought is eligible to become a Bhikshuk (i.e. a Sanyasi) (22).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse no. 43, and Canto 6, verse no. 39.]

दशलक्षणकं धर्ममनुतिष्ठन्समाहितः । वेदान्तान्विधिवच्छ्रुत्वा संन्यसेदनृणो द्विजः ॥२३॥

daśalakṣaṇakam dharmamanutiṣṭhansamāhitaḥ /  
vedāntānvīdhivacchṛtvā saṁnyastedanṛṇo dvijaḥ // 23 //



23. A person who has diligently followed in his life the traditional ten rules of auspicious and righteous living (as laid down in the Smritis and outlined in the next verse no. 24), who has attentively studied the Vedas in the proper way, who has observed the tenets of Brahmacharya (self-control and abstinence from all indulgences) painstakingly in his life, and who has freed himself from the three moral indebtedness or obligations (or has fulfilled his duty as required under these obligations)<sup>1</sup>—verily, only such a man with purity of mind and thought is eligible to become a Bhikshuk (i.e. a Sanyasi) (23).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The three moral indebtedness or obligations of a man are the following—(i) the ‘Rishi-rin’ or moral indebtedness or obligations that he has towards senior sages and seers, and this includes the Guru who is the moral preceptor and guide, because in ancient times Vedas and other scriptures were usually taught only by them. This obligation is fulfilled by serving the sage selflessly, obeying him and studying hard to become a brilliant disciple who would carry forward the heritage of learning and knowledge that the concerned sage is so famed for to the next generation, being always submissive towards the sage and repaying him to the best of one’s ability, and taking care of the Guru in his old age; (ii) the ‘Dev-rin’ or moral indebtedness or obligations that one has towards Gods and deities which involves pleasing them with worship and offering of oblations by means of various religious rituals; and (iii) the ‘Pitri-rin’ or moral indebtedness or obligations that one has towards one’s ancestors, and it includes producing sons and bringing up a noble family which carries forward the honourable name and legacy of the ancestor and enhances his glory.]

धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः । धीर्विद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥२४॥

dhṛtiḥ kṣamā damo'steyaṃ śaucamindriyanigrahaḥ /  
dhīrvidyā satyamakrodho daśakaṃ dharmalakṣaṇam // 24 //

24. The ten signs or markers or pillars of Dharma (righteousness, auspiciousness and nobility) are the following—Dhairya (patience, resilience and calmness of demeanours under adverse circumstances), Kshama (forgiveness), Daman (self control and suppression of natural instincts; restraint of the mind and the body), Asteya (non-stealing), Pavitrata (purity of mind, body, thoughts and actions), Indriya Nigraha (control of all the sense organs of the body), Dhi (wisdom; proper, righteous and auspicious thoughts and intellect), Vidya (correct knowledge and its associated wisdom and erudition which helps one to judge and discriminate between the right and the wrong), Satya (truthfulness; non-deceitfulness and honesty), and Akrodh (non-anger; to have a tolerant, forbearing and compassionate temperament)—verily, these are the ten great tenets of Dharma. They act like indicators of whether a man has lived his life according to established principles of Dharma or not, and to what extent. (24).

[Note—Refer Canto 4, verse nos. 10-12 also.]

अतीतान्न स्मरेद्भोगान्न तथानागतानपि । प्राप्तांश्च नाभिनन्देद्यः स कैवल्यश्रमे वसेत् ॥२५॥

atītānna smaredbhogānna tathānāgatānapi /  
prāptāṃśca nāminandedyaḥ sa kaivalyāśrame vaset // 25 //

25. A person who never thinks of (recalls; broods over) the sufferings and pains or enjoyments and pleasures of the past, who never is concerned about them in the present (i.e. is not affected by present sufferings nor exults at pleasures), and is never bothered about them ever affecting him in any time to come in the future—verily, only such a man is eligible to live in the phase of life called the Kaivalya Ashram, i.e. he is fit to become a Sanyasi. [The term Kaivalya Ashram is explained in verse no. 21.] (25).

अन्तःस्थानीन्द्रियाण्यन्तर्बहिष्ठांविषयान्बहिः । शक्नोति यः सदा कर्तुं स कैवल्याश्रमे वसेत् ॥२६॥

antasthānīndriyāṇyantarbahiṣṭhānviṣayānbahiḥ /  
śaknoti yaḥ sadā kartuṃ sa kaivalyāśrame vaset // 26 //

26. A person who gives no importance to and pays no heed to any of the units consisting his inner self called the Antahakaran<sup>1</sup>, and similarly neglects all the external impulses originating from the world of material sense objects<sup>2</sup>—verily, only such a man is eligible to live in the phase of life called the Kaivalya Ashram, i.e. he is fit to become a Sanyasi (26).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The ingredients that affect the inner self of a person are the constituent parts of his Antahakaran. The Antahakaran with five dimensions or aspects is described in Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 6, and in Paingalo-panishad, Canto 1, verse no. 9, and in Canto 2, verse no. 3—both of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition. The five components of Antahakaran are—(i) Mana (mind), (ii) Buddhi (intellect), (iii) Chitta (the faculty of concentration and memory; knowledge and consciousness), (iv) Ahankar (ego, pride, arrogance), and (v) Vrittis (inherent character, traits, habits, inclinations and temperaments of a creature) which decide the basic nature of a person and the way he would react to a given circumstance, the way he would deal, behave and interact with the world, the way he would interpret things, the way he thinks, the things that would appeal to him and the things he would abhor etc.—all depends upon the mental setup tinged with the fundamental character traits that are firmly ingrained in him.

Since the mind, intellect and the sub-conscious are involved in the definition of Antahakaran, it would follow that the following too would be included as the five components of Antahakaran—(i) Pramaan—knowledge that helps to establish the truth; (ii) Viparyaya—ignorance, delusions, illusions such as imagining a snake in a piece of rope; this is erroneous knowledge; (iii) Vikalp—alternatives; that knowledge which is acquired by hearing of it but may not present the correct picture, such as for example a wooden puppet—there seems an apparent difference between plain wood and the puppet, but they are basically the same and defined with the same word 'wood'; this knowledge is neither true nor false for to say that the puppet is different from an ordinary piece of wood because of its distinctive shape and value would be as much true as saying that it is plain wood; (iv) Nidra—meaning sleep; when a man remains oblivious of any truth just like anything gets hidden in darkness though it is very much there, that man is likened to a man sleeping soundly in spite of the goings on around him and therefore remaining unaware of them; and (v) Smriti—literally meaning memory; it refers to that knowledge which is based on experience and witnessing so that it is etched in memory; such knowledge becomes robust and gets soundly established in mind with the passage of time.

<sup>2</sup>The body of a creature consists of five organs of perception and five organs of action which help him to receive the world and its inputs in the form of sensory perceptions, and then respond to them accordingly. The five organs with which he receives the sensory inputs from the world and which make the creature aware of the

pleasures and sufferings of the world are the following—the eye which is concerned with the function of seeing, the ear which is concerned with the function of hearing, the nose which is concerned with the function of smelling, the tongue which is concerned with the function of tasting, and the skin which is concerned with the function of touching and feeling. These organs are the ones concerned with reception of the world.

The organs which help in response are the following—the hand which helps one to do various deeds and take actions besides receiving and taking anything on behalf of the ‘self’, the leg which takes the creature to his destination as determined by the mind, the mouth which makes him speak and express his desires, the genitals which satisfy his sexual urges, and the excretory which help to eliminate what has been taken in by the mouth in the form of food and drink.

It is vital for a Sanyasi to exercise exemplary control over them. This fact is also endorsed in verse no. 36 below. For instance, if he cannot control his eyes then this organ would prevail upon him and force him to see pleasant sights, and this in turn would silently incite his sub-conscious to long for the objects which present such a charming view. Now, if he forcefully suppresses his desires of obtaining access to the object which had earlier lured the eye then he would be obsessed by it mentally. This obsession with the world would foster frustration because the man would be torn between his desire to look at the charming object and make an effort to acquire it, and the desire to avoid looking at it as it might simply be not possible for him to access it or acquire it at all. This dilemma would consume his energy and time before he forgets about this object in due course of time. But meanwhile the damage has already been done as his peace and natural state of restfulness are severely compromised with. If he does not wisely inculcate the grand thought that this world and its objects have no substance in them and are useless vis-à-vis his spiritual welfare, his sub-conscious mind would be constantly nagging at him to glance surreptitiously at the object. Then he would be suppressing his desires instead of not having any desires at all. Say, how such a mind possessed with desires can ever give true peace to the aspirant?

The gravity of the situation is that there are five such organs of perception and five of action, and one can well imagine the situation of a man who is being pulled in different directions by them at the same time. It’s like a chariot being pulled in different directions by horses who cannot be controlled, or who have not been properly bridled and harnessed. Surely this situation would topple the carriage and gravely injure the passenger as well as the charioteer!]

प्राणे गते यथा देहः सुखं दुःखं न विन्दति । तथा चेत्प्राणयुक्तोऽपि स कैवल्यश्रमे वसेत् ॥२७॥

prāṇe gate yathā dehaḥ sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ na vindati /  
tathā cetprāṇayukto’pi sa kaivalyāśrame vaset // 27 //

27. Just like a dead body has no feeling of pain or happiness, a person who remains indifferent and aloof from such feelings while alive—verily, only such a man is eligible to live in the phase of life called the Kaivalya Ashram, i.e. he is fit to become a Sanyasi (27).

[Note—Refer Canto 4, verse no. 36.]

कौपीनयुगलं कन्था दण्ड एकः परिग्रहः । यतेः परमहंसस्य नाधिकं तु विधीयते ॥२८॥

kaupīnayugalaṁ kanthā daṇḍa ekaḥ parigrahaḥ /

yateḥ paramahaṃsasya nādhikaṃ tu vidhīyate // 28 //

28. A Paramhans Sanyasi (one of the various categories of renunciates) is not supposed to possess more than two Kopins (the piece of cloth to cover the private parts), one Kantha (which is a roughly sewn coarse over-garment made of old, torn and padded pieces of clothes picked up at random), and one Danda (an ascetic's staff or rod) (28).

यदि वा कुरुते रागादधिकस्य परिग्रहम् । रौरवं नरकं गत्वा तिर्यग्योनिषु जायते ॥२९॥

yadi vā kurute rāgādadhikasya parigrahaṃ /  
rauravaṃ narakaṃ gatvā tiryagyonīṣu jāyate // 29 //

29. If he violates this edict and gathers more objects then he is condemned to go to a great hell called 'Rairav', and has a low birth by being re-born in the lower rung of the creation as a bird or insect (29).

विशीर्णान्यमलान्येव चेलानि ग्रथितानि तु । कृत्वा कन्थां बहिर्वासो धारयेद्भ्रातुरञ्जितम् ॥३०॥

viśīrṇānyamalānyeva celāni grathitāni tu /  
kṛtvā kanthāṃ bahirvāso dhārayeddhāturañjitaṃ // 30 //

30. A Sanyasi (a noun used for a person who has taken the stern vows of Sanyas or renunciation and detachment from anything related with this world) should stitch an over-garment or shawl-like covering from tattered and worn out clothes to protect himself from cold and heat, but it should be clean. He should go out of populated areas of a village, and prefer to live in un-inhabited and secluded areas outside it. He should wear ochre clothes (30).

एकवासा अवासा वा एकदृष्टिरलोलुपः । एक एव चरेन्नित्यं वर्षास्वेकत्र संवसेत् ॥३१॥

ekavāsā avāsā vā ekadṛṣṭiralolupaḥ /  
eka eva carennityaṃ varṣāsvekatra saṃvaset // 31 //

31. A Sanyasi should wear only one cloth or remain without it. [The one-piece cloth is wrapped around his body, and if he prefers to discard it then he should only wear the loin cloth. Refer Canto 4, verse no. 17, stanza no. 1.]

He should not have a fickle sight and instead maintain poise and concentration of mind. He should remain unconcerned with or distanced from any of the objects of the world which can be distracting for his calm mind and affect his concentration. [Refer verse no. 26.]

He should roam alone without any company. He should spend the four months of rest, called the 'Chaturmaas', in one place. [This is usually the rainy season as it's impractical to move in rains. This is the time which helps him to give rest to his body and rejuvenate it. Refer Canto 4, verse nos. 14-16.] (31).

कुटुम्बं पुत्रदारांश्च वेदाङ्गानि च सर्वशः । यज्ञं यज्ञोपवीतं च त्यक्त्वा गूढश्चरेद्यतिः ॥३२॥

kuṭumbaṃ putradārāṃśca vedāṅgāni ca sarvaśaḥ /  
yajñaṃ yajñopavītaṃ ca tyaktvā gūḍhaścareedyatiḥ // 32 //

32. A Sanyasi should completely discard any thoughts or memory of his relatives, sons and family as well as the Vedas and their branches, the various obligatory fire sacrifices, and even the sacred thread. [Refer also to Canto 4, verse no. 1, and Canto 5, verse no. 26. This edict is not meant to demean the Vedas or the fire sacrifice or the sacred thread at all, but this is a practical advice sanctioned by the Upanishads because a roaming mendicant is not expected to stay at one place so he can study the Vedas and perform fire sacrifices. Further, he is already advanced in age and so it is not practical for him to read and study any longer while on the move. Again, he has no need for them now that he has taken to the auspicious and spiritually uplifting path of Sanyas, as being enlightened about the basic tenets of the Vedas is a pre-requisite criterion for being initiated into this divine and holy path of Sanyas in the first place, and so any further reading of the scriptures would be not required as it would be superfluous. Doing of fire sacrifices is also not possible for him while roaming from place to place. Once he has accepted the Danda as a sign of his symbolic holding on to the Absolute Truth known as Brahm and having a firm grip on it, the sacred thread also becomes unnecessary, redundant and obsolete. Besides this, the sacred thread is merely a symbol to remind him that he has been baptised into the religious fold and therefore he must be very careful to diligently obey the laws of Dharma, i.e. the proper codes of conduct that are part and parcel of a righteous way of life expected of him. But once he has taken Sanyas, he does not need this external symbol to remind him of his moral duties and to act as a constant bridle on his mind because now it is deemed that the virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, nobility and propriety are an integral part of his character and personality; they are ingrained in his inner-self. It is like a student who would heap books on his study table during his college days, but once he becomes a professional well-versed in his profession he would no longer need them in his day-to-day life.]

On the contrary, a Sanyasi should live and roam anonymously and incognito. [This is to ensure his privacy and avoiding undue attraction of attention and praise. This also prevents his erst-while disciples, relatives and friends from trailing him and creating unnecessary mental tension for him.] (32).

कामः क्रोधस्तथा दर्पो लोभमोहादयश्च ये । तांस्तु दोषान्परित्यज्य परिव्राण्णिर्ममो भवेत् ॥३३॥

kāmaḥ krodhastathā darpo lobhamohādayaśca ye /  
tāṃstu doṣānparityajya parivrāṇṇirmamo bhavet // 33 //

33. A Sanyasi should abandon such negative emotions and traits as having Kaam (lust and desires), Krodh (anger and vehemence), Lobh (greed, avarice), Moha (attractions and attachments), Ahankar (ego, false pride, vanity and their attendant arrogance and haughtiness) etc. (33).

रगद्वेषवियुक्तात्मा समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः । प्राणिहिंसानिवृत्तश्च मुनिः स्यात्सर्वनिस्पृहः ॥३४॥

rāgadveṣaviyuktātmā samaloṣṭāśmakāñcanaḥ /  
prāṇihimsānivr̥ttaśca munīḥ syātsarvaniḥspr̥haḥ // 34 //

34. A Sanyasi should be completely indifferent to all attachments and attractions for anything or anyone in this world, and instead he should treat a ball of earth as well as a piece of stone or gold equally, without distinguishing between them. [Refer Canto 4, verse no. 17, stanza no. 3.]

He should keep away from violence of all kinds (mental, physical, emotional; actual or implied), inculcate the noble virtues of equanimity and fortitude, and become absolutely neutral, dispassionate and detached (34).

दम्भाहंकारनिर्मुक्तो हिंसापैशुन्यवर्जितः । आत्मज्ञानगुणोपेतो यतिर्मोक्षमवाप्नुयात् ॥३५॥

dambhāhaṅkāranirmukto himsāpaiśūnyavarjitaḥ /  
ātmajñānaguṇopeto yatirmokṣamavāpnuyāt // 35 //

35. A Sanyasi who is far from or free from the negative traits such as Dambha (deceit, conceit, falsehood and pretensions), Ahankar (ego, false pride etc.), Hinsa (violence), Paishunya (animal-like qualities, always criticising others) etc., and on the other hand is endowed with the auspicious virtues of wisdom, self-realisation and enlightenment is the one who is eligible to obtain Mukti or liberation and deliverance (35).

इन्द्रियाणां प्रसङ्गेन दोषमृच्छत्यसंशयः । संनियम्य तु तान्येव ततः सिद्धिं निगच्छति ॥३६॥

indriyāṇāṃ prasaṅgena doṣamr̥cchatyasamśayaḥ /  
samniyamya tu tānyeva tataḥ siddhiṃ nigacchati // 36 //

36. If the sense organs of the body get attracted and hooked to their respective objects in this world, it is certain that a man becomes corrupted and mired with bad traits (as he is tempted by the alluring charms of the objects of the sense organs in this world which are very ensnaring by nature, and once one falls into their trap they exert a vice-like grip on him and devour him mercilessly).

On the other hand if he can exercise control over them, it is natural that they would not be able to lead him astray, they would not have any influence upon him and his mind, and consequentially he can obtain success in his spiritual goal of obtaining Mukti or liberation and deliverance (36).

[Note—This concept has been explained earlier in verse no. 26 of this Canto above. The primary form of the creature is his Atma, the immaculate Consciousness. It is only when this Atma comes in contact with the tainted but most fascinating mirage-like charms of the world with which it comes in contact and becomes aware of through the various sense organs of perception such as the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the skin that it gets mired in corruptions and impure thoughts. Therefore, if the intermediary sense organs are removed from the field and stopped from interfering with the Atma's natural inclinations of seeking the good, the holy, the divine and the pure, it is obvious that the creature would be free from these taints and remain pure himself. This world and its illusive charms and temptations are like

fetters that keep the creature shackled forever should he be careless enough to allow himself to be lured by them. It is just like the case of a fish that gets caught in the hook because it is tempted by the bait. It is also like the case of a free-flying bird which is trapped in the net of the bird-catcher because it cannot resist its urge to eat the grains spread to catch it.]

न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति । हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मेव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥३७॥

na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānāmupabhogena śāmyati /  
haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate // 37 //

37. It is not possible to calm down or eliminate the innate desire to enjoy the pleasures and comforts of the sense objects of this material world as long one continues to do so. On the other hand, they are further enhanced and stoked just like a fire into which butter is poured. [That is, so long as the creature continues to remain involved in the material world, it would be impossible for him to break free this fetter and become liberated. It is only when he determines firmly that he would shake off his burden represented by attachments for this material world and its sense objects that this burden is actually dispensed with. It needs a strong will and a firm determination besides full conviction that all desires have to be done away with if one is to find his true spiritual peace and bliss, if one is to find Mukti and Moksha—which means liberation and deliverance as well as emancipation and salvation respectively.] (37).

श्रुत्वा स्पृष्ट्वा च भुक्त्वा च दृष्ट्वा घ्रात्वा च यो नरः । न हृष्यति ग्लायति वा स विज्ञेयो जितेन्द्रियः ॥३८॥

śrutvā sprṣṭvā ca bhuktvā ca drṣṭvā ghrātvā ca yo narah /  
na hrṣyati glāyati vā sa vijñeyo jitendriyaḥ // 38 //

38. A person who is endowed with the glorious and eclectic virtue of having equanimity and evenness of mind, who treats everything and every situation with exemplary stoicism, neutrality, dispassion and an indifferent attitude, such as neither feeling happy and exulted on hearing praises and good words nor feeling sorrowful and pained at being insulted or upon hearing harsh words, who treats both tasty food as well as bland and tasteless food alike, who is unmoved by either the attractions of charming sights or the repulsive feeling of repugnant sights, and for whom both the pleasant sweet smells (such as those of fragrances and perfumes) and reprehensible odour and stinks (such as from decaying or rotten things) make no difference—verily, only such a man is regarded as one who has actually practiced exemplary self-control over his sense organs (38).

यस्य वाङ्मनसी शुद्धे सम्यग्गुप्ते च सर्वदा । स वै सर्वमवाप्नोति वेदान्तोपगतं फलम् ॥३९॥

yasya vānmanasī śuddhe samyaggupte ca sarvadā /  
sa vai sarvamavāpnōti vedāntopagataṁ phalam // 39 //

39. A person who is completely pure in the mind and thoughts, a person who is free from any of the impurities and corruptions that taint the mind and thought of ordinary people—verily, only such a man is able to get the reward of hearing the Vedas and Vedanta (Upanishads) (39).

संमानाद्ब्रह्मणो नित्यमुद्विजेत विषादिव । अमृतस्येव चाकाङ्क्षेदवमानस्य सर्वदा ॥४०॥

saṁmānādbrahmaṇo nityamudvijeta viṣādiva /  
amṛtasyeva cākāṅkṣedavamānasya sarvadā // 40 //

40. A Brahmin (i.e. a learned and self-realised person) should treat praises and honours disdainfully as if they were poison, and accept criticism and harsh words as if they were nectar (40).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse no. 30.

This is intended first to inculcate and then to test continuously if the noble and auspicious virtues of indifference, neutrality, detachment, equanimity, self-control over the mind and thoughts, stoicism, non-anger, calmness of demeanours etc. expected of a Sanyasi as outlined in the previous verses are firmly established in the inner-being of the spiritual aspirant or not.]

सुखं ह्यवमतः शेते सुखं च प्रतिबुध्यते । सुखं चरति लोकेऽस्मिन्नवमन्ता विनश्यति ॥४१॥

sukhaṁ hyavamataḥ śete sukhaṁ ca pratibudhyate /  
sukhaṁ carati loke'sminnavamantā vinaśyati // 41 //

41. A person who calmly and silently accepts being humiliated, insulted, rebuked or admonished, if he humbly and politely hears words without retaliating, and instead remains poised and serene all the while, it is then that he is able to maintain his true peace and tranquillity. Such a man is able to sleeping comfortably and soundly, or roaming around in this world fearlessly while awake. [He will have no burden on his conscience, and would neither fret nor fume at not being able to retort and pay his tormentor in the same coin by using harsh words or abusive language against him. He would not feel frustrated or have an inferior complex that he could not retaliate at being humiliated. So he would have a good night's sleep. Since he has not answered back even to his adversary, he would have no enemy, and so he will have no cause of fear from anyone.]

On the other hand, a person who uses harsh words ruins himself and destroys his own peace and tranquillity (41).

[Note—Anger is one's most dangerous enemy and it has a negative effect on the mind, behaviour and personality of the person. It gives him a bad name; it snatches the peace of the mind; it keeps the man unnerved for a very long time, keeps him agitated and restless, and prevents him from working normally and rationally. This situation stresses him out excessively and acts a drain on his nerves and his energy. On the other hand, a man who remains calm and does not indulge in verbal duals is able not only to maintain his own peace but even bring the bitter moment to an end quickly because the abuser would be fed up, lose steam and fall silent himself. The abuser would be ashamed at his own behaviour and impertinence. If an angry man is answered back his anger is further stoked, and this goes on aggravating the situation instead of quickly bringing it to an end. The abuser or the arrogant opponent of the



Sanyasi will regret himself once the anger is over. He would be frustrated that his tantrums have had no effect on the Sanyasi, rather the latter's calmness would make the tormentor bury his face in self-guilt. Instead of provoking the Sanyasi, he himself feels provoked by the former's silence and smile. The tormentor's inner voice coming out from his Atma would take him to task, though he would not acknowledge it in public out of shame at his behaviour. He would feel dejected and defeated and worn-out by his own intemperate behaviour; the Sanyasi meanwhile would emerge all the more emotionally stronger as well as the winner.]

अतिवादांस्तितिक्षेत नावमन्येत कंचन । न चेमं देहमाश्रित्य वैरं कुर्वीत केनचित् ॥४२॥

ativādāṃstitikṣeta nāvamanyeta kañcana /  
na cemaṃ dehamāśritya vairam kurvīta kenacit // 42 //

42. A wise aspirant on the path of Sanyas should diligently practice to tolerate, with great forbearance, equanimity, neutrality and poise, harsh and intemperate words uttered by others. He should not insult others under any circumstance, nor retort at or harbour any ill-will for their rude behaviour. He should never allow anger to taint his inner-being by being vengeful against or frustrated with his tormentors.

He should never have animosity or ill-will with others just for the sake of this mortal and perishable gross body being subjected to insult or humiliation. [This is because he knows well that this body is perishable, gross and worth of contempt nevertheless, and secondly that this body is not his 'true self' which is being subjected to ridicule. So, there is really no point at getting annoyed with someone who insults the body—for the offender is totally ignorant; he is surely not wise enough like the Sanyasi, and it is deemed to foolish to get angry with those who have no intellect worth the name in them. A wise Sanyasi understands the fact that 'he' is not being insulted as his truthful 'self' is pure consciousness that is an exalted entity that cannot be demeaned or humiliated at all, and what is being insulted is the gross body which is not his 'self'. So what is he to bother about? How does it matter to 'him' if someone casts aspersions on his mortal gross body in the misplaced notion that he is admonishing the Sanyasi himself?] (42).

क्रुध्यन्तं न प्रतिक्रुध्येदाक्रुष्टः कुशलं वदेत् । सप्तद्वारावकीर्णां च न वाचमनृतां वदेत् ॥४३॥

krudhyantaṃ na pratikrudhyedākruṣṭaḥ kuśalaṃ vadet /  
saptadvārāvākīrṇāṃ ca na vācamanṛtāṃ vadet // 43 //

43. A wise spiritual aspirant (i.e. a Sanyasi) should not be angry towards anyone, or harbour any feeling of revenge, retaliation or malice for someone who has been angry at him, has insulted him, or has used any harsh or uncouth language for him. He should never seek retribution; he should never be vengeful. On the other hand, he should use pleasant words for his abuser and tormentor. [Refer Canto 6, verse no. 5. The effect of this attitude would be that the abuser and tormentor would himself feel guilty and ashamed at his own impertinent, intemperate and uncivilised behaviour.]

The tongue that is associated with the seven doors of the body (the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and one mouth) should never be used to speak lies or falsehoods. [That is, one should never use the tongue to tell a lie in relation to what

one knows. The knowledge comes from these sense organs—viz. the eyes helps one to see and have a visual knowledge of things, the ears makes him hear about them, the nose tells him how the thing smells, and the mouth helps to taste and eat things worth eating. However, it is the tongue that expresses the way the world is perceived by these individual sense organs by ‘speaking about them’, for none of these organs can express their views in words. So when one uses the tongue to speak, he must be truthful and honest in what he says because he is merely a neutral messenger who is merely conveying the message of these sense organs. In other words, no personal interpretations or ideas should be allowed to interfere with what the tongue has to say about what the sense organs make out of this world. In essence it means that the wise man always speaks the truth no matter how bitter and uncomfortable it might be for others.] (43).

अध्यात्मरतिरासीनो निरपेक्षो निराशिषः । आत्मनैव सहायेन सुखार्थी विचरेदिह ॥४४॥

adhyātmaratirāsīno nirapekṣo nirāśiṣaḥ /  
ātmanaiva sahāyena sukhārthī vicarediha // 44 //

44. A person desirous of peace and happiness should concentrate his mind and heart on spiritual matters, and pull his attention away from worldly issues. He should remain calm and quiet; he should be unmoved and unruffled by any circumstance. He should not expect anything from anyone; he should abandon all desires, hopes and expectations. He should help himself (i.e. he should be independent and self-reliant) while roaming fearlessly and freely in this world (44).

इन्द्रियाणां निरोधेन रागद्वेषक्षयेण च । अहिंसया च भूतानाममृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥४५॥

indriyāṇāṃ nirodhena rāgadveṣakṣayeṇa ca /  
ahiṃsayā ca bhūtānāmamṛtatvāya kalpate // 45 //

45. A wise spiritual aspirant (i.e. a Sanyasi) should keep his sense organs under tight control. He should eliminate attachments or animosities. He should not harm or cause any sort of violence (mentally, physically and emotionally; actually or implied) to anyone.

By following these tenets a person is able to obtain Mukti (freedom from all fears, freedom from all fetters that tie the soul to the gross body as well as the equally gross world of material sense objects) (45).

अस्थिस्थूणं स्नायुबद्धं मांसशोणितलेपितम् । चर्मावबद्धं दुर्गन्धि पूर्णं मूत्रपुरीषयोः ॥४६॥

asthithūṇaṃ snāyubaddhaṃ māṃsaśoṇitalepitaṃ /  
carmāvabaddhaṃ durgandhi pūrṇaṃ mūtrapurīṣayoḥ // 46 //

46. [Verse nos. 46-51 outline the despicable nature of the creature’s gross body. Refer also to Canto 4, verse nos. 25-29 in this context.]

This body is a treasury of diseases, pains, sufferings of various sorts, and torments of all imaginable kinds. It has pillars represented by the bones, tying ropes representing the nerves, veins and arteries etc., it is plastered by using a mixture of blood and flesh, and it is enclosed in a shell of the skin. It is always full of urine and stool, and is therefore inherently stinking with a foul odour (46).

जराशोकसमाविष्टं रोगायतनमातुरम् । रजस्वलमनित्यं च भूतावासमिमं त्यजेत् ॥४७॥

jarāśokasamāviṣṭaṃ rogāyatanamāturam /  
rajasvalamanityaṃ ca bhūtāvāsaimaṃ tyajet // 47 //

47. This body is a cause of perpetual anxiety and miseries arising from the fear or dread of old age and various diseases that afflict it.

Since the gross physical body is created by the union of the male sperm called the ‘Virya’ and the dark fluids called ‘Raja’ present in the female reproductive organs, it (the body of the creature) is named ‘Raja-swal’—i.e. an entity which is predominantly dark or gross in nature, or an entity which is inherently unclean, or an entity which has a preponderance of ‘Raja Guna’ in it which makes it inherently and naturally attracted towards the charms, pleasures and comforts of this material world and its sense objects.

This gross body is mortal and perishable; no one can say for certain when it would come to an abrupt end (47).

मांसासृक्पूयविण्मूत्रस्नायुमज्जास्थिसंहतौ । देहे चेत्रीतिमान्मूढो भविता नरकेऽपि सः ॥४८॥

māṃsāsṛkṇpūyaviṇmūtrasnāyumajjāsthisaṃhatau /  
dehe cetprītimānmūḍho bhavitā narake’pi saḥ // 48 //

48. The body is occupied by the five Bhuts (i.e. the five primary elements of Nature such as earth, water, fire, air and sky). [In other words, this body is made up of entities which are inert, non-living and non-conscious themselves par-se, and therefore the body cannot be active, conscious or alive on its own. In fact, this body is like any other normal dwelling such as a brick-and-concrete house in which a man lives. The resident of this body is the Atma which is pure consciousness and the truthful identity of the man/creature having this body.]

Hence, one should not have an attachment with this body (and use it merely as a temporary habitat for the Atma till the time it finds its liberation and deliverance after having fulfilled all its obligations).

If a man is stupid enough to love this body made up of blood, fluids, flesh, marrow, bones, urine, stool and a network of nerves and blood vessels, then surely he would also love the greatest of hells (because this body is as miserable and tormenting to the Atma as an actual hell) (48).

सा कालपुत्रपदवी सा महावीचिवागुरा । सासिपत्रवनश्रेणी या देहेऽहमिति स्थितिः ॥४९॥

sā kālaputrapadavī sā māvīcivāgurā /

sāsipatravanaśreṇī yā dehe'hamiti sthitiḥ // 49 //

49. To have a sense of ego, pride and possessiveness vis-à-vis the body is the cause that takes a man to the hell called Kaal-sutra. [The word 'Kaal' means death or destiny, and 'Sutra' means a string, a formula or a principal cause. Therefore, to be attached with the body would act as a string that would prevent the soul from finding its final liberation and deliverance, for the soul would be attached with the body like a kite is to a string. Attachments with or attractions for the body is the cause that forces the Atma to remain trapped in its snare, and, through it, with the world. This is because the body lives in the world with which it is closely associated as they share common grossness and are needed for each other. The world has significance only till the time there are living beings doing various things in this world, for no one would be interested in a world with dead creatures. The body has significance because it is the medium by which the creature interacts with the world and enjoys its material sense objects. They have a symbiotic relationship. Since the body is inherently decayable and the world also has a limited life-span—this is because both have a certain time of their births, and anything that is born must come to an end, they are very different from the Atma which is an imperishable and eternal entity that is never born and therefore never dies. The Atma takes a new birth because it is deluded and falsely attracted to this body and the world. It is its desire to enjoy the world that it needs the body. Once the desire for the world is done away with, the need for the body would also vanish. Earlier, verse nos. 34, 36-37 also stress this point. When the Atma forces upon its self the need to take a birth, it enters a body and consequentially goes through a hell of its own making. So, what is the way out, how can the Atma get freedom from the endless cycle of birth and death, and the constant fear of sufferings associated with them? Obviously, it is by detaching and distancing itself from the gross, perishable and despicable body.]

Similarly, this attachment with and longing for the body is the cause of a man going to the hell called 'Kaal-vichi' as well as to the hell called 'Asipatra-van' which is like a dense forest with cobweb-like undergrowth of entangled creepers etc. which trap the soul for eternity and prevents its freedom (49).

सा त्याज्या सर्वयत्नेन सर्वनाशोऽप्युपस्थिते । स्पृष्टव्या सा न भव्येन सश्वमांसेव पुलकसी ॥५०॥

sā tyājyā sarvayatnena sarvanāśe'pyupasthite /  
spraṣṭavyā sā na bhavyena saśvamāmseva pulkasī // 50 //

50. To have a sense of ego and pride vis-à-vis the body is as reprehensible and condemnable as eating dog-meat. So a wise man should make an all-out effort to forsake it and completely eliminate such ill-conceived and ill-fated notions. [That is, one should not be boastful of the body. One should not have any sense of ego vis-à-vis the body. One should not be proud about the body's beauty, strength and abilities. Like the body, they too are transient and perishable.] (50).

प्रियेषु स्वेषु सुकृतमप्रियेषु च दुष्कृतम् । विसृज्य ध्यानयोगेन ब्रह्माप्येति सनातनम् ॥५१॥

priyeṣu sveṣu sukr̥tamapriyeṣu ca duṣkr̥tam /

visrjya dhyānayogena brahmāpyeti sanātanam // 51 //

51. An aspirant desirous of his own spiritual welfare must ensure that this sense of ego and pride pertaining to the body does not even touch (i.e. affect or influence) his mind under any circumstance, even if everything is ruined as a result of this humble attitude. [For instance, a truly realised man would have no hesitation at remaining calm when his adversary abuses him or insults him or taunts him. He would also not retaliate if he is beaten—refer verse no. 19. He would willingly and cheerfully serve others without bothering for his exalted position in society. All these behaviours might make him appear ridiculous, inferior or menally retarded in the eyes of ordinary people who have a sense of false pride, vanity and chauvinism, but actually he has risen above these narrow-minded considerations, and instead has attained a high stature and maturity as a highly self-realised, wise and enlightened person.]

He should see only auspicious virtues in people and treat such virtues as personifications of his dear ones with whom he wishes to have contact or relationship, and on the other hand see inauspicious and evil qualities as personifications of those with whom he does not wish to have any contact or relationship.

Such an aspirant is able to attain the truthful and eternal Brahm with the help of Dhyān Yoga—or he is able to reach his spiritual destination with the aid of proper thinking and proper means. He remains calm and poised, and by keeping good company he inculcates nobler virtues which would provide the required impetus for his spiritual and mental well-being and upliftment in the long run.] (51).

अनेन विधिना सर्वास्त्यक्त्वा सङ्गन्शनैः शनैः । सर्वद्वन्द्वैर्विनिर्मुक्तो ब्रह्मण्येवावतिष्ठते ॥५२॥

anena vidhinā sarvāmstyaktvā saṅgāñśanaiḥ śanaiḥ /  
sarvadvandvairvinirmukto brahmaṇyevāvatīṣṭhate // 52 //

52. By following these grand tenets, a wise Sanyasi is able to gradually overcome, in due course of time, all his worldly attractions and attachments, and ultimately reach the supreme goal of Brahm-realisation (52).

एक एव चरेन्नित्यं सिद्ध्यर्थमसाहायकः । सिद्धिमेकस्य पश्यन्ति न जहाति न हीयते ॥५३॥

eka eva carennityaṃ siddhyarthamasahāyakaḥ /  
siddhimekasya paśyanhi na jahāti na hīyate // 53 //

53. An aspirant desirous of attaining success in his spiritual quest should always roam freely and humbly, without having any pretensions or encumbrances (because they would act as a spiritual drag for him and shackle him down).

A Sanyasi does not feel jealous when he sees others who have attained success and possess some kind of Siddhis (mystical powers). He does not abandon his own chosen path of total neutrality, detachment and renunciation just to compete with the other person out of jealousy and because he feels inferior to him for not possessing certain Siddhis. In fact, such resolute pursuit of his own path of Sanyas does give him Siddhis as well. [This Siddhi, or attainment and achievement, is of a high spiritual denomination as it provides the Sanyasi direct access to the eternal fount of

blessedness and blissfulness which the other ordinary mystical powers that bestow the practitioner with magical abilities that are more of a worldly nature cannot provide.] (53).

कपालं वृक्षमूलानि कुचेलान्यसहायता । समता चैव सर्वस्मिन्नेतन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥५४॥

kapālaṃ vṛkṣamūlāni kucelānyasahāyatā /  
samatā caiva sarvasminnaitanmuktasya lakṣaṇam // 54 //

54. To have a scooped-out pot (made from wood or coconut shell) for drinking water, to take rest under the shade of a tree very close to the base of its trunk, to use tattered pieces of cloth to cover the body, to have a habit of living alone and avoiding company, and to treat all living beings equally—verily, all these are the signs of an aspirant who is deemed to have attained Mukti or spiritual liberation and deliverance (54).

सर्वभूतहितः शान्तस्त्रिदण्डी सकमण्डलुः । एकारामः परिव्रज्य भिक्षार्थं ग्राममाविशेत् ॥५५॥

sarvabhūtahitaḥ śāntastridaṇḍī sakamaṇḍaluḥ /  
ekārāmaḥ parivrajya bhikṣārthaṃ grāmamāviśet // 55 //

55. A Sanyasi should be helpful to all and think about the good and welfare of all creatures; he should be a well-wisher of all living beings.

He should always remain calm and poised. He should constantly carry the ascetic's staff called the Tridand as well as the water-pot called the Kamandalu with him.

He should constantly and consistently remain engrossed and submerged in the thoughts of the pure consciousness known as the Atma; he should be perpetually in a state of meditation and contemplation, concentrating upon the Atma to the exclusion of all other things. [Refer Canto 6, verse no. 40.]

He should roam about alone, and enter a village (or populated areas) only when he has to beg for food (55).

एको भिक्षुर्यथोक्तः स्याद्द्वावेव मिथुनं स्मृतम् । त्रयो ग्रामः समाख्यात ऊर्ध्वं तु नगरायते ॥५६॥

eko bhikṣuryathoktaḥ syādvāveva mithunaṃ smṛtam /  
trayo grāmaḥ samākhyāta ūrdhvaṃ tu nagarāyate // 56 //

56. In the scriptures, only a person who always remains alone and also goes out alone for begging for food (i.e. he never keeps company and never begs with a group of other mendicants) is called a true Bikshuk (i.e. a person who sustains himself by begging for food). This is because a company of even one person is regarded as deemed 'Mithun', or having an intercourse (relationship; interaction) with another person. Company of another person forms 'a couple', and in such a situation inter-relationships of some sort are bound to precipitate. This situation creates a chain of consequences which are detrimental to the spiritual welfare of the Sanyasi.

A company of more than two people, such as a group of three persons, would be like a miniature village, while a group of more than three persons would be symbolically like a small town. [So it is best avoided by a Sanyasi. Therefore, he must always remain alone. Refer also to Canto 4, verse nos. 14-16, 19, and to Canto 7, verse no. 1] (56).

नगरं नहि कर्तव्यं ग्रामो वा मिथुनं तथा । एतत्त्रयं प्रकुर्वाणः स्वधर्माच्च्यवते यतिः ॥५७॥  
राजवार्तादि तेषां स्याद्भिक्षावार्ता परस्परम् । स्नेहपैशुन्यमात्सर्यं संनिकर्षाच्च संशयः ॥५८॥

nagaraṃ na hi kartavyaṃ grāmo vā mithunaṃ tathā /  
etattrayaṃ prakurvāṇaḥ svadharmāccyavate yatiḥ // 57 //  
rājavārtāditeṣāṃ syādbhikṣāvārtā parasparam /  
snehapaīśūnyamātsaryaṃ saṃnikarṣāṇna saṃśayaḥ // 58 //

57-58. A wise and erudite Sanyasi should therefore not give another person a chance to come near him so that a situation similar to having Mithun (intercourse), being in a village or a small town does not arise. If he allows himself to fall into this trap of having a company of one or the other kind then he would have fallen from his chosen path and violated the rules of Dharma as applicable to a Sanyasi.

When more than one person assembles at a place, it is natural that there would be gossip, some kind of idle talk or some discussion on a variety of subjects. There would be discussion about the king or rich people, and other topics such as where and what type of alms and charities are available. Such talks would lead to either agreements or disagreements, creating in their wake likings, attractions or attachments for certain things or people on the one hand, and repulsions and dislike for others on the other hand. Dissensions, back-biting and finding fault with others, or undue praises and bias for someone else, would crop in unnoticed. These things are unavoidable when people have nothing worth to talk about; it is a part of human nature. There is no doubt about it (57-58).

एकाकी निःस्पृहस्तिष्ठेन्न हि केन सहालपेत् । दद्यान्नारायणेत्येव प्रतिवाक्यं सदा यतिः ॥५९॥

ekākī niḥspṛhastiṣṭhena hi kena sahālapet /  
dadyānnārāyaṇetyeva prativākyaṃ sadā yatiḥ // 59 //

59. That is why the scriptures have ordained that the Sanyasi should always stay alone without having any kind of attachments or links with anybody or anything else. He should not talk with others unnecessarily. If someone talks with him or bows before him to show respect, then he must respond with the words ‘Narayan’<sup>1</sup> (59).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Narayan is one of the divine names of Lord Vishnu, the senior-most of all the Gods and regarded as a personification of the supreme transcendental Brahm himself. The use of this word in daily life is just like we say ‘hello’ in English—that is, the word ‘Narayan’ is employed as a means of respectful address for someone; it’s a word of greeting. It is also used to acknowledge someone’s else’s greetings. From the metaphysical perspective this word indicates that the person using it is highly enlightened and wise because he knows that the Supreme Being known by the name of Narayan is present before him in the person of the man standing in front. He is not addressing the physical gross body of the man, but the Atma resident inside this body,

the Atma which is a personification of Brahm, the Supreme Being. In fact, the man using the term 'Narayan' to reply someone is actually addressing the Lord in the physical form of the other person, and not the gross body of the person as is recognised by the world to be the identity of the concerned person. In the present context, the use of 'Narayan' shows that the Sanyasi sees Lord Vishnu everywhere, in each living being. So he replies to the greeting, or acknowledges the greeting, just because he knows that the Lord himself is calling out to him, and not replying would be tantamount to causing insult to the supreme Lord. Otherwise he would have preferred to remain silent. This observation would be in consonance with the edict that a Sanyasi is expected not to have any company, and avoid talking with anyone whatsoever. Here, he is not responding to some mortal man, but to the Lord himself in a personified form.]

एकाकी चिन्तयेद्ब्रह्म मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः । मृत्युं च नाभिनन्देत जीवितं वा कथंचन ॥६०॥

ekākī cintayedbrahma manovākkāyakarmabhiḥ /  
mr̥tyum ca nābhinandeta jīvitam vā kathamcana // 60 //

60. A Sanyasi should live alone in a secluded and an un-inhabited place, and always remain submerged in meditating upon only one divine entity known as Brahm. He should concentrate upon Brahm and devote all the efforts of his mind, speech, body and actions or deeds in this direction to the exclusion of all other things. [That is, he should think of nothing else other than Brahm, and devote all his energy and time in meditating and contemplating upon Brahm. He must speak only about Brahm; he must talk only about Brahm and nothing else. He must think of Brahm, and nothing but Brahm. He must devote all the actions of his body in serving the Lord and endeavouring to reach his spiritual goal without getting deflected from it even for a moment.]

He should never adore life or long to live, nor should he ever fear or dread of death or loathe it (60).

कालमेव प्रतीक्षेत यावदायुः समाप्यते । नाभिनन्देत मरणं नाभिनन्देत जीवितम् । कालमेव प्रतीक्षेत निर्देशं भूतको यथा ॥६१॥

kārameva pratikṣeta yāvadāyuh samāpyate /  
nābhinandeta maraṇam nābhinandeta jīvitam /  
kārameva pratikṣeta nirdeśam bhūtakō yathā // 61 //

61. He should patiently and stoically wait for the time when death comes naturally. A Sanyasi is not expected to either long for a long life or die before due time<sup>1</sup>.

He should be like a paid employee of a Lord who waits quietly for instructions of his master before doing anything—i.e. a Sanyasi should wait patiently for the time when his Lord decides that he must leave his mortal body and find eternal freedom (61).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>A wise person is one who understands and interprets the advice given in the scriptures correctly and with proper wisdom. This stanza means that he should not find an excuse for avoiding Sanyas because of its harsh conditions, as they would speed up the decay of the body and cause death sooner than it would normally have been due—because 'dying before its due' is not the correct thing to do. 'Not longing



for a long life' also does not mean that he can commit suicide, or willingly cause harm to the body so as to cut short his life-span. Not dying before its due implies that he avoids undue suffering to the body, eats properly and generally takes good care of its physical health. This does not mean pampering the body—for 'not longing for a long life' takes care of this, but it means avoiding a harsh treatment to the body which it cannot tolerate—for this would comply with the requirement of 'not dying before its due'. It ought to be noted here that on the one hand this Upanishad derides the body and says that it is worthy of contempt, and on the other hand it advises its proper upkeep.

Well, it must not be forgotten that this body is the abode of the holy Atma which is a personification of the supreme Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness. This body is like a shrine for this Atma representing the Supreme Being. Hence, like the shrine, it must also be properly taken care of. Otherwise, it would be tantamount to desecration of the shrine which houses the deity known as the Atma. But this does not mean that one should be indulgent in the gross physical body, and forget that it is worth only because of the resident Atma in it. So, both things go hand-in-hand. One should respect the body as it is the abode of the Atma, but, at the same time, be wary of its gross and entrapping nature that prevents this same Atma from finding its freedom. A delicate balance is to be struck between the two by a wise, erudite and enlightened Sanyasi.]

अजिह्वः षण्डकः पङ्गुरन्धो बधिर एव च । मुग्धश्च मुच्यते भिक्षुः षड्भिरैतैर्न संशयः ॥६२॥

ajihvaḥ ṣaṇḍakaḥ paṅgurandho badhira eva ca /  
mugdhaśca mucyate bhikṣuḥ ṣaḍbhiretairna saṁśayaḥ // 62 //

62. [Verse nos. 62-68 outlines the qualities that make a man eligible to take Sanyas.]

A mendicant who lives like a person who has no taste for delicious food (i.e. whose tongue has lost its sense of taste due to some reason such as upon catching cold or some other diseases of the stomach), a person who is impotent, a person who is physically handicapped such as being lame, a person who is blind and deaf, and a person who seems so stupid that he remains in a constant state of stupor, a seemingly dull-witted man with a very low intelligent quotient so much so that he does not appear to know even the basic things of life and what happens around him—verily, only a Sanyasi who has these six eclectic virtues is eligible to obtain Mukti (or liberation and deliverance, salvation and emancipation) (62).

[Note—Refer Canto 4, verse nos. 21 and 35 also. This attitude and behaviour is willingly adopted by him as a means to avoid company and lead a life of solitude. He wishes to remain aloof from all attractions of the world and the body, hence has developed a natural sense of neutrality towards them which is interpreted by others, who are not aware of his evolved spiritual stature and high level of enlightenment, as his physical deformity or intellectual shortcoming. Actually it is not so. He is very wise instead of being a fool as he pretends to be.]

इदमिष्टमिदं नेति योऽन्नपि न सज्जति । हितं सत्यं मितं वक्ति तमजिह्वं प्रचक्षते ॥६३॥

idamiṣṭamidaṁ neti yo'snannapi na sajjati /  
hitaṁ satyaṁ mitaṁ vakti tamajihvaṁ pracakṣate // 63 //

63. A Sanyasi who accepts food without paying attention to its appetising taste or its blandness<sup>1</sup>, and one who speaks prudently, pleasantly and truthfully words of wisdom and good advice without favour or fear<sup>2</sup>—such a wise, erudite and enlightened Sanyasi is one who is symbolically regarded as being indifferent to taste<sup>1</sup> and as the one who has controlled his tongue<sup>2</sup> (63).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Anyone who does not have control over his taste buds would find it too difficult to eat food that is not tasty. Such a man is a serf of his organ of taste, and therefore he can't claim to have practiced full control over his sense organs. Desire for tasty food would compel him to compromise on the principles of Sanyas in as much as he would prefer to accept food from those households which offer him food of his liking. His mind would be pre-occupied with searching for tasty food. Such a person is deemed to be serf of his sense organs. Besides this, it is also a practical advice given for a wandering Sanyasi. It is expected of him that he accepts food from a new household every day, and not visiting any one house twice. It is obvious that no two households would offer the same type of food. Therefore it is essential for him to exercise self-control over the taste buds. This also ensures that no one can entice him with the offer of good and tasty food, and this frees him from falling prey to any bonds and personal relations.

<sup>2</sup>Speaking the truth always is a hard thing to observe in a world accustomed to hearing things which it wants to hear. It is a form of Tapa or observation of severe penance and vow to always to speak the truth even under duress and the risk of personal harm. Often such plain speaking makes a man unwanted in and unacceptable by the society. But it is also mentioned in this stanza that he gives good advice and speaks pleasantly. Of course, anyone who gives good advice and speaks affably is welcome and endeared by others. But of course his advice should be honest and neutral, without any bias and favour for one, or against another.]

अद्यजातां यथा नारीं तथा षोडशवार्षिकीम् । शतवर्षं च यो दृष्ट्वा निर्विकारः स षण्डकः ॥६४॥

adyajātām yathā nārīm tathā ṣoḍaśavārṣikīm /  
śatavarṣam ca yo dr̥ṣṭvā nirvikārah sa ṣaṇḍakah // 64 //

64. A Sanyasi who treats a new-born girl child, a young woman of sixteen years of age, and an aged woman who is nearly a hundred years old as being alike, without having any sense of either attraction or aversion for them, without liking one and disliking the other—such a wise Sanyasi is one who is symbolically likened to an impotent man. [As is obvious here, he is completely dispassionate, has overcome the natural instinct of a man to be attracted towards a young woman, and has inculcated the noble virtue of exemplary equanimity and non-distinction. Refer also to Canto 4, verse nos. 3-4.] (64).

भिक्षार्थमटनं यस्य विण्मूत्रकरणाय च । योजनान्न परं याति सर्वथा पङ्गुरेव सः ॥६५॥

bhikṣārthamaṭanaṁ yasya viṇmūtrakaraṇāya ca /  
yojanānna paraṁ yāti sarvathā paṅgureva saḥ // 65 //

65. A Sanyasi who goes out only to beg for food, who goes out only to attend to the calls of Nature such as to evacuate his urinary bladder or his stools, and who does not venture out for more than one Yojan (i.e. for not more than 8 miles) during his

begging rounds—such a wise Sanyasi is one who is symbolically likened to the man who is lame and physically handicapped. [He spends the rest of his time and energy peacefully in meditation and contemplation. He does not aimlessly waste his time wandering here and there.] (65).

तिष्ठतो व्रजतो वापि यस्य चक्षुर्न दूरगम् । चतुर्युगां भुवं मुक्त्वा परिव्राट् सोऽन्ध उच्यते ॥६६॥

tiṣṭhato vrajato vāpi yasya cakṣurna dūragam /  
caturyugāṃ bhuvam muktvā parivrāṭ so'ndha ucyate // 66 //

66. A Sanyasi who sees not further than a distance of four Yugs (i.e. a distance of not more than roughly ten feet), either when sitting or when standing—such a wise Sanyasi is one who is symbolically likened to the man who is blind (66).

[Note—In effect this means that he does not allow his eyes to wander around in the world. This helps him to prevent the mind from being distracted by so many sights of the world, both the pleasant as well as the unpleasant. While the pleasant sights might charm his mind to such an extent that he forgets that he is to remain un-involved in the delusory world and its temptations and instead spend his time on matters of the Spirit and his spiritual well-being, doing meditation and contemplation, the unpleasant sights would irritate him and snatch his peace of mind. Both interfere in his calm demeanours and observance of the principles of strict neutrality, equanimity and dispassion. His mind gets involved directly or indirectly. So, it is important for him to turn a 'blind eye' to every kind of distraction.

His not seeing more than a distance of ten feet is simply a figure of speech to emphasise the need to observe strict control over the tendency of the mind to see and observe things in this material world, and then allow itself to get involved in the sights it sees, to think over them and get hooked to them inspite of it being taught continuously and repeatedly by the scriptures that this world is like a mirage seen in a desert, that it has no substance and pith in it, that it is as delusory as the colourful sky seen at sunset after the monsoon rains, and that it is like a bird-catcher's trap for the creature.

It ought to be noted here that it is possible for a man to exercise control over all the rest of the five organs of perception, such as the nose which smells, the skin that touches, the tongue which tastes, and the ears that hears, because none of them have as long a reach as the eye. We can see things far away in the atmosphere of the earth and even in the far depths of the universe by using binoculars and telescope, but of course we can't touch them, hear them, smell them and taste them. It is the eye that enables the man to learn things from far and wide, it is the eye with which he closely and directly observe the world. If the eye is shut, the world is as good as dead. That is why we have the phrase 'turn a blind eye' inspite of being aware of anything or any development—which means to neglect it willingly. So, it becomes very easy for the Sanyasi to neglect the world and keep himself aloof from its temptations if he should be able to control his eyes.

In the context of the previous verse no. 64 this verse becomes all the more clear. One can distinguish between a girl, a young lady or an old woman only when one sees them, and the negative tendency of getting passionate towards a voluptuous woman is also directly related to the eye.

Not seeing more than ten feet is also a metaphoric way of saying that a Sanyasi should not overly worry about the future, and instead concentrate his attention on the present. He should remain withdrawn from the world like a tortoise ensconced in its shell. So when a Sanyasi does not allow his mind to wander into the sights of the world, he is able to maintain his peace and serenity.

Refer also to Canto 4, verse no. 18.]

हिताहितं मनोरामं वचः शोकावहं तु यत् । श्रुत्वापि न शृणोतीव बधिरः स प्रकीर्तितः ॥६७॥

hitāhitaṃ manorāmaṃ vacaḥ śokāvahaṃ tu yat /  
śrutvāpi na śṛṇotīva badhiraḥ sa prakīrtitaḥ // 67 //

67. A Sanyasi who pays no attention to, or bothers to hear, any word pertaining to his personal welfare or harm, and similarly has no ear for words describing sufferings or happiness of any kind in this world—such a wise Sanyasi is one who is symbolically likened to the man who is deaf (67).

[Note—This is a step ahead in the process of attaining tranquillity and calmness of the mind that non-seeing and non-tasting, as described in verse nos. 66 and 63, have already initiated. Previously, verse nos. 40-43 have already stressed the need to remain stoic and not to retort in spite of the gravest of insults and provocation from adversaries. This can only happen when one turns a ‘deaf ear’ to them.

Verse nos. 43-45 sum-up the need to exercise control over the body and its sense organs in order to attain success in any spiritual endeavours by the aspirant.]

सान्निध्ये विषयाणां यः समर्थो विकलेन्द्रियः । सुप्तवद्वर्तते नित्यं स भिक्षुर्मुग्ध उच्यते ॥६८॥

sānnidhye viṣayāṇāṃ yaḥ samartho vikalendriyaḥ /  
suptavadvartate nityaṃ sa bhikṣurmugdha ucyate // 68 //

68. A Sanyasi who is not attracted towards any of the sense objects of the material world and remains indifferent to all of them is like a sleeping man in spite of him being near to such temptations, his body being able to acquire them, and his organs being healthy and potent enough to enjoy them if he so wishes—such a wise Sanyasi is one who is symbolically likened to the man who is very innocent, naïve and like if he was in a state of stupor (68).

[Note—This is again a step forward in the path of Sanyas. Refer also to verse no. 62 above. He is actually a man who has attained the exalted stature of Turiya, which is the fourth state of consciousness and is equivalent to attaining Samadhi. Such a man would appear to be doing something externally, but internally he is aloof and detached from everything so much so that his mind is virtually asleep—for his mind does not perceive any sensory perceptions originating from this material world, nor does it respond to them like a sleeping man.

This state of being like a sleeping man indicates that his external gross body and its sense organs have been completely brought under control. This ensures that the mind is left to meditate and contemplate without any disturbances.]

नटादिप्रेक्षणं द्यूतं प्रमदासुहृदं तथा । भक्ष्यं भोज्यमुदक्यां च षण्ण पश्येत्कदाचन ॥६९॥

naṭādiprekṣaṇaṃ dyūtaṃ pramadāsuhrdaṃ tathā /  
bhakṣyaṃ bhojyamudakyāṃ ca ṣaṇṇa paśyetkadācana // 69 //

69. A Sanyasi should not even glance at the following six entities—his relatives and compatriots of earlier life when he was a householder, performances by dancers,

actors and acrobats etc., gambling and other lowly means of passing time, a young woman, delicious eatables, and a menstruating woman (69).

रागं द्वेषं मदं मायां द्रोहं मोहं परात्मसु । षडेतानि यतिर्नित्यं मनसापि न चिन्तयेत् ॥७०॥

rāgaṃ dveṣaṃ madaṃ māyāṃ drohaṃ moham parātmasu /  
ṣaḍetāni yatinityaṃ manasāpi na cintayet // 70 //

70. A Sanyasi should never have animosity, ill-will or malice towards others (Dwesh), nor should he have attachments or endearments towards or show favour to his kith and kin (Raag). [That is, he should practice exemplary neutrality, dispassion, detachment, equanimity and fortitude.]

He should keep a safe distance from such faults as Moha (attractions, attachments and longings), Mada (arrogance, haughtiness and hypocrisy), Maya (delusions, attachments to illusionary charms of this material world), and Raag-Dwesh (having endearment and attachment or animosity and ill-will respectively for and against anyone).

He must not let such emotions and thoughts ever taint his mind and intellect (70).

मञ्चकं शुक्लवस्त्रं च स्त्रीकथालौल्यमेव च । दिवा स्वापं च यानं च यतीनां पातनानि षट् ॥७१॥

mañcakaṃ śuklavastraṃ ca strīkathālaulyameva ca /  
divā svāpaṃ ca yānaṃ ca yatināṃ pātānāni ṣaṭ // 71 //

71. For a Sanyasi the following six faults are like grave sins, and therefore he should avoid them at all costs—to occupy a dais or a high seat (i.e. to accept honour and praise, or even otherwise to sit on a high pedestal of respect, because that stokes his ego and the false sense of pride and superiority complex), to wear or accept white clothes (i.e. to accept any ceremonial garment as it gives him some special status that would attract attention of the society and give him some sort of honour and prestige which he is expected to avoid), to indulge in talks or gossiping about women (because that is tantamount to mental intercourse), to yearn for pleasure and comforts of the sense organs (such as the desire to see pleasant sights, hear sweet words or melodious music, eat tasty food, to touch things that titillate, smell sweet fragrances, to grab beautiful things with the hand, to go to pleasant places, to eat delicacies with the mouth, and to enjoy sex with the genital organs, because all of them mean indulgences and self-gratification), to sleep during the day (as it makes him lazy and indolent; he would be wasting precious time that he is expected to spend on meditation and contemplation), and to ride a carriage to move from one place to another (as he is expected to move on foot, because riding a vehicle is tantamount to giving comfort to the legs and pampering the body) (71).

दूरयात्रां प्रयत्नेन वर्जयेदात्मचिन्तकः । सदोपनिषदं विद्यामभ्यसेन्मुक्तिहेतुकीम् ॥७२॥

dūrayātrāṃ prayatnena varjayedātmacintakaḥ /

sadopaniṣadam vidyāmbhyasenmuktihaitukīm // 72 //

72. It is advisable for a Sanyasi desirous of self realisation and meditation upon the Atma (the pure consciousness) that he does not go to far away places. Instead, he should spend his time and energy on concentrating on the study of the Upanishads which give him the knowledge that would help him find spiritual peace as well as liberation and deliverance from this world for which he has taken to Sanyas in the first place (72).

न तीर्थसेवी नित्यं स्यान्नोपवासपरो यतिः । न चाध्ययनशीलः स्यान्न व्याख्यानपरो भवेत् ॥७३॥

na tīrthasevī nityaṁ syānnopavāsaparo yatīḥ /  
na cādhyayanaśīlaḥ syānna vyākhyānaparo bhavet // 73 //

73. It is not advisable for a Sanyasi to spend an extended period of time in a pilgrim place<sup>1</sup>, or observe excessive and prolonged fasting<sup>2</sup>. He should also not develop the habit of too much reading and teaching of the too many and too varied scriptures (i.e. scriptures other than the Upanishads)<sup>3</sup>. He should abstain from giving lectures or discourses in assemblies and congregations<sup>4</sup>.

He should not behave in a sinful, pervert or wicked manner in a general way (73).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>All the restrictions and prohibitions imposed on a Sanyasi are meant for his spiritual welfare and general well-being, and not intended to impose unnecessary hardship on him or torture him or punish him. It is incredulous to even think in these terms. To be frank and honest, pilgrim places are riddled and infested with corruptions, pretensions, deceit and falsehood, along with commercialisation of religion and its holy practices, reducing them to nothing but farce. They are more vexing and entangling for the Spirit than providing it with spiritual liberation and deliverance. A wise Sanyasi is advised to avoid living for a long time in these places because there are great chances of his being trapped in the temptations of easy life where food is easily available and other creature comforts are also as easily available. There are huge crowds, countless rituals, meaningless discussions and debates, and numerous other distractions for the mind which a Sanyasi is expected to shun.

If he stays long in a pilgrim place, all the negativity of these places are bound to have an impact on his psyche and influence his sub-conscious which would lose its pristine innocence and spiritual beauty to become mired with the same corruptions that have eclipsed others who are not fortunate enough to have had the same level of wisdom and enlightenment that had inspired the Sanyasi to take the vows of Sanyas in the beginning.

Verse nos. 56-60 of the present Canto 3, and verse nos. 14-16 of Canto 4 also say that company of all kinds is to be avoided by the Sanyasi under all circumstance, and staying in a pilgrim place would go against this edict. Such prolonged stay would be no different from staying in one's own village or house. Verse nos. 61-69 of the present Canto 3 are also very relevant here.

<sup>2</sup>Verse no. 61 of this Canto 3 asserts that he must not do anything that can be construed as causing the body pre-mature death. Prolonged fasting causes the body to become weak and susceptible to diseases. It also creates an yearning for tasty food, something he should also avoid—there are umpteen numbers of verses to highlight this fact, viz. Canto 3, verse nos. 14, 38, 62-63, 90, 92, and Canto 4, verse no. 30 amongst others.

<sup>3</sup>In old age, eye sight becomes weak. A Sanyasi must not carry possessions, so he cannot carry voluminous scriptures. He is expected to be roaming, so he cannot sit down to read and study scriptures. He is not expected to stay at one given place, avoid company and discussions, which again precludes his living at a place near libraries, or attending discourses and discussing metaphysical principles with others. Besides these compulsions and restrictions, he is already advanced in age and therefore has very little time and energy left to pore over scriptural texts—this he must have already done in his younger days as a Brahmachari when he had studied the scriptures under the guidance of a Guru (a teacher). In fact, now is the time for him to meditate and contemplate more than doing anything else.

It ought to be noted in this context that verse no. 72 allows him to study the Upanishads, but the present verse no. 73 talks about him not reading too much and too many scriptures. The reason is that while the Upanishads talk in unison about one and only one Truth that would be easy to follow, and create no confusion, perplexity, doubt, schism or dichotomy in the mind of the Sanyasi, which in its turn make it easy for him to follow their tenets in leading a spiritual life and tread on a single path to his final emancipation and salvation, reading of many and varied scriptures, discussing them and trying to search the Truth by delving in their voluminous texts would be like searching a hair in a hay-stack. Such endeavours only lead to confusions and perplexities instead of removing them. A man has taken to the path of Sanyas not to become a scholar, something he had intended to do when he had studied the scriptures early on in life as a Brahmachari student under the guidance of a teacher, but to find the ultimate peace and rest for his soul. He also has very limited time at his disposal to fritter it away in debates and discussions or reading varied many scriptures.

Therefore, it is most prudent and wise for him to shun many scriptures and concentrate his time and energy in self-study of the Upanishads. Since his aim as a Sanyasi is to find final Mukti and Moksha, which means final liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation, in the least possible time and by the easiest method, he should desist from such situations that would cause doubts and confusions, such as by reading or studying so many scriptural literatures. On the other hand, Upanishads are to the point and brief, they teach him the truthful path in precise and succinct manner.

Further, in old age he deserves physical and mental rest which also necessitates his abstaining from spending time on reading and studying voluminous treatises of diverse nature, content, philosophy and path. The extent of the variation of the scriptures is got when one reads the Sita Upanishad, verse nos. 21-31 which lists the scriptures that evolved from one single primary body of knowledge. Besides them, there are the eighteen Purans and an equal number of sub-Purans, and the Itihasas (Hindu mythological histories). Even a cursory glance would show that it is impossible for someone to read them fully in the limited time available to him during one lifetime. That is why only the study of the Upanishads is prescribed and lauded as the only scripture that are of any real value and importance for a spiritual aspirant.

So we find that though on the face of it there appears to be a contradiction in what verse nos. 72 and 73 say, but actually it is not so. Their intention is clear if we read into these verses intelligently and with wisdom. If a Sanyasi is able bodied and has the inclination to read and study, if he stays in a monastery where the facility for reading books and self-study is available, then he is welcome to do so. It is after all a good thing to study and deduce things for one's own self. It is a good way to spend time instead of, say, idle it away in gossip or just plain lazing in the sun. But of course this good fortune to be able to study the scriptures is not easily available to all the Sanyasis as more often than not they may be illiterate or not able to understand the hidden meaning of these highly esoteric texts of metaphysical philosophy, because in the latter case it would be counter-productive as wrong interpretation may be more harmful than not reading the scriptures at all. Then there are the many circumstantial compulsions which are an integral part of a Sanyasi's life—such as for

example the lack of basic facilities, old age, the need to beg for food, the requirement that he should be on the move, that he should not carry any possessions except the ascetic's rod, a water-pot, a body-wrapping garment etc. How can one expect someone to devote his mind and energy to study scriptures in these situations?

The idea is that even if a Sanyasi is not able to study the scriptures though he had eagerly wished to do so earlier—because while he was younger and in the earlier phase of life as a householder, he had postponed such study, due to his busy life, for the time when he would become a Sanyasi and had hoped that then he would be freed from his obligations and responsibilities to find time to devote to the study of the scriptures, but as it turned out eventually, he finds this option of study impractical and impossible due to harsh realities—he must not lament or feel remorseful or regret at his inability to study the scriptures. He must not feel guilty that he has missed on some sacrosanct requirement for attaining spiritual enlightenment, liberation and deliverance just because he missed reading and studying the scriptures. He must understand that the essence of the scriptures is very simple, and it comes to him when he becomes privy to the quintessence of these scriptures in the form of the study of the Upanishads which has been specifically prescribed in verse no. 72. The study of the Upanishads would tell him that the essential teaching of all the scriptures is to become self-realised and aware of the Atma residing in his body, that this Atma is the pure consciousness and his truthful 'self', that this Atma is eternal and imperishable, that nothing in this world is true except this Atma, that Mukti or liberation and deliverance is when one understands the 'truth' and frees himself from the fetters of ignorance and its accompanying delusions, and so on and so forth. If this is not achieved, then merely reading or studying the scriptures is a waste of time and energy.

So he must be rest assured that inspite of his inability to read and study the scriptures, his emancipation and salvation, his liberation and deliverance is certain if he has understood the truth espoused by the Upanishads. He must understand that the scriptures are merely tools that help one to be made aware of and led towards the 'truth', and they are not to be regarded as one's spiritual destination. What is more relevant and important for a Sanyasi is inculcating high moral values and wisdom in order to succeed in his spiritual practice.

<sup>4</sup>Discourses, debates, discussions, lectures etc. draw on his already depleted energy and strength of the body as it has become old and comparatively weak because of his having to abandon the comforts of a home. Besides this, such things bring in their wake either praises or criticism, both of which are deemed to be vexing for the Spirit, for while praise stokes ego and a sense of pride in the Sanyasi, criticism evokes negative emotions which would need efforts on his part to overcome. Both agitate his mind and make it restless. Praises for his oratory, knowledge and wisdom are a natural accompaniment of giving discourses and lectures, while he is bound to ruffle some egos and offend some sentiments by his frank views on many assorted subjects, thereby evoking criticism from others. Both are to be avoided equally by him. The Upanishads prohibit a Sanyasi's involvement in such things—refer verse no. 18, 40-43, 56-60 and 71 of this Canto 3 in this context.]

अपापमशठं वृत्तमजिह्मं नित्यमाचरेत् । इन्द्रियाणि यमाहृत्य कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ॥७४॥

apāpamaśaṭhaṁ vṛttamajihmaṁ nityamācaret /  
indriyāṇi samāhṛtya kūrmo'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ // 74 //

74. Just like a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell to retire, the wise Sanyasi should withdraw his senses of perception from their respective objects in this world and establish them in his inner self.



He should control the working of the mind and eliminate its natural inclination to think of this world and make efforts to please the latter (74).

क्षीणेन्द्रियमनोवृत्तिर्निराशीर्निष्परिग्रहः । निर्द्वन्द्वो निर्नमस्करो निःस्वधाकार एव च ॥७५॥

kṣīṇendriyamanovṛttirnirāśīrniṣparigrahaḥ /  
nirdvandvo nirnamaskāro niḥsvadhākāra eva ca // 75 //

75. Abandoning all desires and wishes for anything as well as the inclination to seek and accumulate them (refer verse nos. 36-37), a wise Sanyasi should become calmed down and rested. He should be freed from having any worries, and remain immune to either sorrows or happiness (refer verse no. 38).

He should even discard bowing before Gods as well as offering oblations and libations to the spirits of dead ancestors (because his Lord is now the supreme transcendental Brahm, the Supreme Being) (75).

निर्ममो निरहंकारो निरपेक्षो निराशिषः । विविक्तदेशसंस्तो मुच्यते नात्र संशय इति ॥७६॥

nirmamo nirahaṅkāro nirapekṣo nirāśiṣaḥ /  
viviktadeśasaṁsanto mucyate nātra saṁśaya iti // 76 //

76. A Sanyasi should become immune to having longing and attachment for anything or anyone dear to him, as well as be free from having the taint of ego, pride and vanity of any kind whatsoever. [Refer verse nos. 40-42, 49-50.]

He should always live alone with having any company. [Refer verse nos. 56-60.]

If he lives an exemplary life as narrated above, he is surely able to free himself from the fetters that had been shackling him till now to this world (76).

अप्रमत्तः कर्मभक्तिज्ञानसंपन्नः स्वतन्त्रो वैराग्यमेत्य ब्रह्मचारी गृही वानप्रस्थो वा मुख्यवृत्तिका चेद्ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भवेद्गृहाद्वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेद्यदि वेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादेव प्रव्रजेद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वाऽथ पुनरव्रती वा व्रती वा स्नातको वाऽस्नातको वोत्सन्नाग्निरनग्निको वा यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत्तद्वैके प्राजापत्यामेवेष्टिं कुर्वन्त्यथवा न कुर्यादाग्न्येय्यामेव कुर्यादग्निर्हि प्राणः प्राणमेवैतया करोति तस्मात्त्रैधातवीयामेव कुर्यादितयैव त्रयो धातवो यदुत सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति ॥७७॥

apramattaḥ karmabhaktijñānasampannaḥ svatanthro  
vairāgyametya brahmacārī grhī vānaprastho vā  
mukhyavṛttikā cedbrahmacaryaṁ samāpya grhī  
bhavedgrhādvani bhūtvā pravrajedyadivetaratathā  
brahmacaryādeva pravrajedgrhādvā vanādvātha  
punaravratī vā vratī vā snātako vā'snātako  
votsannāgniranagniko vā yadahareva virajettadahareva  
pravrajettaddhaike prājāpatyāmeveṣṭiṁ kurvanyathavā  
na kuryādagneyyameva kuryādagnihprāṇaḥ prāṇamevaitayā  
karoti tasmāttraidhātaviyāmeva kuryādetaiva trayo dhātavo

yaduta sattvaṃ rajastama iti // 77 //

77. The vows of Sanyas (renunciation) can be taken by any person—whether he is a Brahmachari (a student still studying under a teacher; the first phase of life), a Grihastha (a householder; the second phase of life) or a Vaanprastha (a wandering pilgrim or a man living in a secluded place away from the house; the third phase of life)—if a sincere and deep-rooted sense of Vairagya (renunciation, dispassion and detachment) sprouts in his inner being at any time in life, if he diligently and with great care contemplates upon the Atma, the pure consciousness that is the real and truthful ‘self’, along with having an overwhelming desire to abandon the illusionary and transient world and instead seek the ‘Absolute Truth’ which is the essence that would provide eternity and spiritual bliss to him. [Refer verse nos. 9-10, 12-13 of the present Canto 3, and verse no. 37 of Canto 4. This is called ‘Aatur Sanyas’. It means that a person can take the vows of Sanyas if he is very eager to do so, but this eagerness should be sincere and honest, and not due to certain compulsions or circumstances. For taking Sanyas, an Aatur (eager) person need not wait till his old days to take the vows of Sanyas, for such vows can be accepted if true renunciation and detachment sprouts in his heart.]

If Vairagya (renunciation, dispassion and detachment) is not deep-seated and naturally-born then he must not hurry but follow the due process of passing through and completing the three earlier phases of life, such as Brahmacharya, Grihastha and Vaanprastha, before taking to the path of Sanyas<sup>1</sup>.

On the other hand, if the sense of Vairagya becomes profound, deep-seated, strong and steady early on in life to such an extent that nothing would ever be able to sway the aspirant from the path of Sanyas once he takes to it then he can take the vows of Sanyas directly after the first phase of Brahmacharya.

Likewise, if profound Vairagya sprouts in the inner being of a person any time later in life when he is either passing through the second phase of life as Grihastha (householder phase), or the third phase as a Vaanprastha (a forest-dweller or one who has left the house and wanders as a pilgrim), then he can take to Sanyas without waiting for the completion of the full term living in that particular phase.

The only overriding criterion for taking to and being successful in the path of Sanyas is overwhelming, sincere, deep-rooted and steady sense of Vairagya. Therefore, whether a person is Brahmachari or not, whether he is educated or not, whether he does fire sacrifices or not—as soon as sincere Vairagya sprouts in his inner being he can accept the vows of Sanyas. [Refer verse nos. 10, 12-13 of the present Canto 3, and verse no. 37 of Canto 4.]

Though it is prescribed that the formality of doing the ‘Prajapatya Ishti ritual’ (as described in Canto 3, verse no. 10-11) should be done at the time of initiation into the fold of Sanyas, but if Vairagya is profound and robust then the observation of this formality can be dispensed with. Or, one can offer oblation to any fire to suffice for this ritual. This is because Agni (fire) is equivalent to Pran (the primary life-forces in creation), and with offering oblations to the Agni the spiritual aspirant is actually nourishing his own Pran (essential factors of life-consciousness that are present inside his own ‘self’ in the subtle form of the Atma which is pure consciousness).

Another option is to do the ritual of ‘Traidhaatvi’ (which is related to the worship of the three elements called Dhatus). There are basically only three elements called Dhatus in creation, and they are the fundamental Gunas or qualities known as Sata, Raja and Tama<sup>2</sup>. So, the spiritual aspirant can complete the formality of the ‘Ishti ritual’ by offering these three Gunas to the sacred fire in a symbolic manner.

[Verse no. 79 of the present Canto 3 gives details of these two concepts of Traidhaavti and Ishthi rituals, and how they are observed. Meanwhile, offering of these three Gunas to the sacred fire means that the Sanyasi overcomes all sense of his individuality, his false sense of ego and pride, and thereby becomes emotionally purified. He gets rid of the tainting influences of these three Gunas which determine his overall personality, thought process and behaviour, and negates all the negative influences of any of these qualities for the rest of his life. He is able to neutralise the effect of these three qualities on his personality, mind and temperament, and becomes as immune to their influences as a piece of rock is to its surroundings.] (77).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This is because if he is wise, intelligent and discriminating enough, he would be closely observing each passing day of his life, and he would have realised the harsh realities of the world and the body—that they are equally gross, painful, entrapping and delusory, and none of them can give true and real happiness to him in spite of his best of efforts and spending the entire life in serving them both. In fact, both the body and the world are utterly selfish by nature, for as long as the person continues to serve them and devote himself to them, they are interested in him, and as soon he is unable to live up to their expectations he is shunned by them.

So, by the time he enters the last phase of life to become a Sanyasi, the bitter lessons of life mentally prepares him to accept Sanyas voluntarily, sincerely, truthfully and honestly. He stops gratifying the body and longing for the material comforts and sense pleasures obtainable from this world—because he now knows of their deceptive, transient and selfish nature. His renunciation and detachment for the world and its sense objects, and his non-attachment with the gross body would therefore be self-inspired, sincere, honest and natural, coming out of his personal experiences of life rather than being forced and artificially imposed.

Hence, it would be easier for him to adhere to the principles of Sanyas and seek his Mukti (spiritual liberation and deliverance) without falling prey to worldly and bodily temptations. He would have been fed-up with whatever he had observed and experienced in life—back-biting, undue criticism, lack of loyalty, all-round betrayals and selfishness of others, pains and sufferings, death and decay, frustrations and perplexities, diseases and deformities—all of them in their true colour and in full-blown form. So, by the time he reaches the phase of Sanyas, his bitter experiences kindle sincere renunciation, dispassion and detachment in him. Since he has had a first-hand experience of the bitter world, his conviction and faith in the futility of pursuing the world and the truthfulness of following the path of Sanyas as a means of finding true spiritual solace and succour would be unflinching, unwavering, convincing, abiding and robust.

On the other hand, if he takes to Sanyas due to some tragedy or circumstantial compulsions or events in life, such as death of some dear one, loss of property and trade, disease and deformity, natural calamities such as famines, droughts and earthquakes and such other unfortunate events, then his renunciation and detachment would be momentary and transient—for sooner rather than later he would forget his misfortunes and revert to his old habits and start regretting his decision of taking to Sanyas. He would yearn for the things and the people that he had left behind, the comforts and pleasures he was accustomed to, and he would harbour a secret desire to get them back once his heart and mind are able to overcome the initial shock of the misfortune or the circumstance which had made him take Sanyas in the first place. He would be tempted by their sight and thoughts, and swerve towards them at the first opportunity. In short, his Sanyas is short-lived and as fickle as a bubble of water. Such imposed and artificial form of Sanyas is not sincere and convincing, it is repressive, suppressive and regressive for the soul instead of being uplifting, enhancing, empowering and encouraging for it.

<sup>2</sup>The Sata, Raja and Tama are the three virtues or qualities in creation which determine the nature and temperament of all creatures. The character of all the living beings in the entire creation is dependent upon these three primary qualities called the Gunas.

(a) The *Sata Guna* is the best of the three qualities present in any creature. It is a positive quality and is marked by a propensity for following the path of nobility, auspiciousness, probity, propriety, virtuousness, holiness and righteousness. Creatures that have a predominance of Sata Guna are inclined to do selfless service, be benevolent, merciful, kind and gracious, have coolness of head and a rationale and balanced mind, be contented, have humility and piety etc. Such creatures are devoted to good values in life and have a desire to acquire knowledge that would help them reach higher spiritual goals in life.

This Sata Guna is marked by high standards of ethical and moral existence that makes the bearer of such qualities highly respected in society. Such people have a spiritual dimension to their personality. This quality is spiritually uplifting and gives a divine halo to those who possess it and practice it.

The Vasanas that have the Sata Guna or quality dominant in them are like a veil covering the lamp or like a smoke covering the fire. A slight breeze will remove this smoke. Similarly a little bit of prayer and meditation will remove the Satwic desires; its removal requires the least effort.

(b) The second quality is the *Raja Guna* and it makes a man more attracted to this material world and its charms, and less spiritually inclined. The Raja Guna is the medium quality marked by a greater percentage of worldly passions, desires and attachments and their natural offshoots in a creature. It makes a creature inclined towards the material things of the gross world and their enjoyments, towards creation of wealth, its enhancement and protection, and generally having a desire for growth, development and expansion etc. It covers such qualities as worldly yearnings, passions, a stormy nature, agitated behaviour, ambitions, selfishness, expansionist tendencies, a desire to acquire, retain and develop such acquisitions even to the detriment of one's long term spiritual welfare and even if such actions cause pain to others. All these pertain to this materialistic world. Such qualities give worldly fame and prosperity. If these qualities are judiciously mixed with the Satwic qualities, then they provide the person the better of the two worlds, both in terms of worldly fame as well as spiritual well being.

The Vasanas that have the Rajasic Guna or quality dominant in them can be compared to dust on a mirror. In this case some dusting and rubbing is needed to clean the mirror; a greater effort is needed as compared to the case with Satwic quality.

(c) The third quality is called the *Tama Guna* and is the meanest and the basest of the three Gunas. It is a demeaning quality in a creature that leads to his downfall and perpetual entanglement with things that are considered improper and unethical. It creates an inclination for committing all sorts of sins, misdeeds and demeanours. It leads the creature towards negativity and inspires him to acquire negative qualities such as various vices, evils, sins, perversions etc. It makes him inclined to be greedy, rapacious, haughty, arrogant, lustful, intoxicated, vile and wild to the extreme. Such a creature with a predominance of Tama Guna has utter disregard for propriety, noble virtues and ethics, for righteousness and morality.

In brief, it is the most degrading, denigrating and contemptible of the three characteristics in a person, and leads to such behaviour which is utterly immoral, denigrating and depraved, marked by grossness, crassness and recklessness. It therefore leads to his downfall, ignominy and ruin as well as ignorance, delusions, gloom, inertia, anger, frustration etc.]

अयं ते योनिर्ऋत्वियो यतो जातो अरोचथाः । तं जानन्नग्न आरोहाथानो वर्धया रयिम् ॥७८॥

ayaṃ te yonirṛtviyo yato jāto arocathāḥ /  
taṃ jānannagna ārohāthāno vardhayā rayim //78 //

78. After having properly done the Ishti ritual, the aspirant should smell the fire and say the Mantra ‘Ayaṃ Te Yoniha’ (78).

इत्यनेन मन्त्रेणाग्निमाजिघ्रेदेष वा अग्नेर्योनिर्यः प्राणः प्राणं गच्छ स्वां योनिं गच्छ  
स्वाहेत्येवमेवैतदाहवनीयादग्निमाहृत्य पूर्ववदग्निमाजिघ्रेद्यदग्निं न विन्देदप्सु जुहुयादापो वै सर्वा देवताः  
सर्वाभ्यो देवताभ्यो जुहोमि स्वाहेति हुत्वोद्धृत्य तदुदकं प्राश्नीयात्साज्यं हविरनामयं मोदमिति शिखां  
यज्ञोपवीतं पितरं पुत्रं कलत्रं कर्म चाध्ययनं मन्त्रान्तरं विसृज्यैव  
परिव्रजत्यात्मविन्मोक्षमन्त्रैस्त्रैधातवीर्यैर्विधेस्तद्ब्रह्म तदुपासितव्यमेवैतदिति ॥७९॥

ityanena mantreṇāgnimājighredeśa vā agneryoniryaḥ prāṇaḥ  
prāṇaṃ gaccha svāṃ yoniṃ gaccha  
svāhetyevamevaitadāhavanīyādagnimāhṛtya  
pūrvavadagnimājighredyadagnim na vindedapsu juhuyādāpo  
vai sarvā devatāḥ sarvābhyo devatābhyo juhomi svāheti  
hutvodhṛtya tadudakaṃ prāśnīyātsājyaṃ haviranāmayam  
modamiti śikhāṃ yajñopavītaṃ pitarāṃ putraṃ kalatraṃ karma  
cādhyayanaṃ mantrāntaraṃ visṛjyaiva  
parivrajatyātmavinmoksamantraistraidhātavīyairvidhestadbrahma  
tadupāsitaavyamevaitaditi // 79 //

79. The meaning of this Mantra is as follows—‘Oh the Fire God! The entity that is all-pervading and the universal inspirer of everything is the cause of your origin. It is due to this reason that you are adorned with a radiant splendour, the glory, the magnificence and the majesty like your creator. [The entity alluded here is ‘Brahm’, the cosmic Consciousness that is at the root of everything coming into being in this creation.] By becoming aware of your origin, please be established in the Pran. Being thus established in my Pran, you should enhance my wisdom, erudition and knowledge which are like assets for me.’ [Usually the word ‘Pran’ is used to indicate the vital winds or airs that sustain life in this creation. But in the present context, ‘Pran’ has a wider import and it refers to the vital life-consciousness in this creation, the factor that injects both ‘life’ and ‘consciousness’ into the otherwise inane and gross world at large and the body of the creature at the individual level. The Pran is the ‘vital spark of life’ present in the creature. Fire is also the vital ‘spark of life’ and it is therefore synonymous with Pran. This is proved by the fact that a creature whose body has become cold, from which warmth and heat are gone, dies—which means ‘life’ or ‘Pran’ has left his body. When a man dies, his body becomes cold, but while he is alive it is warm, meaning that he is ‘alive’, in spite of certain medical conditions such as coma and being brain-dead when he is physically regarded as being as good as dead. But since ‘fire’ is present inside his body to keep it warm, he is not technically ‘dead’. No one buries a man till his body is warm and he continues to breathe. But it must be noted that if one were to treat ‘Pran’ as merely being the vital winds or airs, then it would be doing injustice to the institution of ‘Pran’ because the

vital winds are not entirely able to inject life in this creation had it not been for the 'fire' to lend its heat, warmth, energy and dynamism to it. Hence, the mysterious entity that gives both the fire and the vital winds/airs their ability to infuse 'Pran', or life and consciousness, in this creation is the 'Brahm' implied in this stanza.]

Indeed, the Pran (here meaning the vital winds or airs) is the progenitor of the Agni (fire). [That is, the air is a necessary condition for the fire to light up and remain lighted. No fire can be started or sustained without air. This fact is very easy to verify. If the air is removed, even the fiercest of raging fires would be suffocated to death and get extinguished. After all, this is the principle of physics that is used to bring fire under control during blazes and infernos—by firmly wrapping or covering the fire with some chemical so that all supply of air to it is eliminated. If the fire does not get its Pran, i.e. if the fire is prevented from 'breathing air', it would die. When smouldering charcoal is puffed into, the hidden fire in it springs back to life—a fact employed to re-kindle the fire-pit of the sacrifice after a day's rest.]

Hence, this Mantra establishes oneness or non-duality between the Pran and Agni. That is, we conclude that Pran and Agni are equally important and synonymous with each other.

To perform the above ritual of Ishti, one should take some fire from the main Ahawaniya Agni (which is the formal fire lit to invoke the deities during fire sacrifices), and symbolically accept that fire by smelling it with the Mantra narrated above. [This ritual symbolically establishes the sacred fire inside the inner being of the person who is about to take the vows of Sanyas. There are two benefits—one, he would no longer need to do external fire sacrifices as the fire is established in his own being in the Pran or the vital winds and consciousness that pulsate in his body, and two, this consecrated fire would give him the required energy, vitality and stamina to go through the tough life of Sanyas.]

If due to some reason or circumstances fire is not available to perform the initiation rituals then the aspirant can use plain water also for this purpose. The aspirant should have the following thought—'Indeed, all the deities (Gods) are an image of the water element. Therefore, I am offering oblations to them in the water and request them to accept it (like they would have readily accepted these offerings if I had made them to the sacred fire element).' [In other words, he has realised that the water and fire are the same supreme Brahm having two forms just like the same Brahm is also known by different names that are assigned to different Gods, who in turn symbolise the different forces of Nature. Water as well as the fire are equally important as far as sustenance of creation is concerned; both are equally necessary for this creation to come into being. Indeed, scientists search for water as well as warmth when they search for life anywhere in the universe. Mere presence of water is not sufficient for fostering life anywhere—this is evident in frozen places on earth such as glaciers which are nothing but water in a condensed form, but they lack vibrant life because there is no fire and its accompanying warmth and heat present there.]

After that, some water in which the offerings were made should be taken and sipped. [This would be symbolically like smelling the fire as described earlier.] This water in which the offering of clarified butter (called Ghee) was made previously is a symbolic provider of good health and deliverance from the fetters that tie down the aspirant (just like the fire element does because of its purifying properties that symbolically burn all the fetters of the person who does the fire sacrifice).

Once this is finished, the aspirant should also shave off the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the scalp worn by all baptised Hindus) and discard the Yogyopavit (the sacred thread) for all times to come. He should also abandon forever any contact with the

members of his family—such as his father, his son, his wife etc. He should also distance himself from all the worldly responsibilities that compel him to get involved in doing all sorts of deeds, getting engaged in either teaching or learning, and all other formalities and rituals including the recitation of Mantras and formal forms of worship.

Indeed, only such an enlightened person who has realised the profundity of the Atma and its overriding spiritual importance is eligible to become a Parivrajak or accept the vows of Sanyas. [That is, only an aspirant who is wise, enlightened and self-realised, who treats his pure conscious Atma as the only truthful entity with which to interact and to have anything to do with at all in this world is the candidate most suited to accept Sanyas.]

One should endeavour to become enlightened about the supreme transcendental Brahm, the Absolute Truth, with the aid of the ‘Traidhaatavi Mantras’. [The different Mantras employed for initiation into Sanyas are narrated in Canto 4, verse no. 37, and the great Mahavakyas or the sacrosanct sayings of the Vedas are referred to in Canto 4, verse no. 38. Becoming enlightened and realised is made possible because when one has overcome his ego and pride, when he has become absolutely neutral and dispassionate, when having the grand virtues of equanimity and evenness is a way of life, it is only then that he would have developed a broad perspective of life and its manifold meaning. He would see the all-pervading nature of the universal Truth as it unfolds its secrets in all the facets of life in this world. Then no one would be an enemy and no one would be friend; all sorrows and pains would be no different from joys and happiness. One would become absolutely calm, poised and serene. This would lead to a great sense of peace and bliss which are signs of being Brahm-realised.]

The divine entity that is a personification of the excellent and most sublime virtues of absolute truthfulness, enlightenment, wisdom and knowledge—verily, it is known as Brahm. It is this Brahm that is worthy of being worshipped and pursued. Indeed, it is exactly in the way narrated here. [That is, a sincere Sanyasi should worship and meditate upon Brahm who has the eclectic virtues as enumerated in this Upanishad.] (79).

पितामहं पुनः पप्रच्छ नारदः कथमयज्ञोपवीती ब्राह्मण इति । तमाह पितामहः ॥८०॥  
 सशिखं वपनं कृत्वा बहिःसूत्रं त्यजेद्बुधः । यदक्षरं परं ब्रह्म तत्सूत्रमिति धारयेत् ॥८१॥  
 सूचनात्सूत्रमित्याहुः सूत्रं नाम परं पदम् । तत्सूत्रं विदितं येन स विप्रो वेदपारगः ॥८२॥

pitāmahaṁ punaḥ papraccha nāradaḥ kathamayajñopavīti  
 brāhmaṇa iti // tamāha pitāmahaḥ // 80 //  
 saśikhaṁ vapaṇaṁ kṛtvā bahiḥsūtraṁ tyajedbudhaḥ /  
 yadakṣaraṁ paraṁ brahma tatsūtramiti dhārayet // 81 //  
 sūcanātsūtramityāhuḥ sūtraṁ nāma paraṁ padam /  
 tatsūtraṁ viditaṁ yena sa vipro vedapāragah // 82 //

80-82. The holy sage Narad asked Prajapati Brahma further—‘Oh Brahmin! How can a man who does not wear the Yagyopavit (the sacred thread)<sup>1</sup> still be called a Brahmin (or someone who occupies a high stature, both moral and spiritual, in this world, is deemed to be wise, learned and well-versed in the tenets of the scriptures, is regarded as holy and honourable, and is given great respect by other people)?’

Prajapati explained—‘Oh Narad! A truly wise, learned and enlightened man is he who abandons all external signs of being exalted or of a high birth as a Brahmin<sup>2</sup> by shaving off all hairs on the head, including the tuft on the top of the head called the Shikha, along with the sacred thread worn across the chest, called the Yagyopavit. Instead, he should sufficiently be erudite and enlightened enough to understand that the supreme transcendental sublime Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, is the only eternal and absolute Truth in creation that pervades uniformly in each unit of creation without exception, and therefore it is not proper and wise to confine this all-pervading and all-inclusive cosmic divine entity to some specific signs such as the hair or the sacred thread to imply that these are more representative of Brahm, or are more closer to Brahm, or are more empowered, purifying and spiritually uplifting than any other entity in creation.

Anything that gives the basic knowledge or information about other things, anything that acts as a key that can unlock the enigmatic secrets of unknown things, anything by knowing which one can come to know all other things, is called a ‘Sutra’. [The word Sutra means a formula or basic knowledge or key that can help one to unravel the great secrets which are still unknown to him. For instance, if one knows the fundamental theories in science and really understands the basics of mathematics then he can apply this knowledge to not only solve the most complex of theoretical problems appearing in his examination papers but also knows how to apply the great truths of science and mathematics in practice in life. These theories and formulas are universally applicable and can benefit the learner only if he can apply them to the practical problems of life as and when they appear.]

Hence, a person who has come to grips with the profound secrets of Brahm, a person who has deeply understood the reality and truthful nature of Brahm, is indeed the one who has truly and really understood the essence of the Vedas and other scriptures (80-82).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The concept of the *Yagyopavit* or the ‘sacred thread’ have been described in a number of Upanishads, viz. (i) Krishna Yajur Veda = Brahmo-panishad, verse no. 4-15. (ii) Atharva Veda = Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 14-19, 27; Par Brahm Upanishad, verse nos. 3-20.

The Yagyopavit is given to a Hindu child as part of his baptism rituals. It is a constant reminder to him as he grows up into an adult that he has certain moral obligations to live up to and certain basic standards that he must observe at all costs. He must be constantly on the vigil not to do anything that would undermine the authority and sanctity of this thread which acts as virtual string binding him to the vows of righteousness, auspiciousness and nobility in thought and action. It is his ‘sacred’ duty to uphold this path as laid down in the scriptures to which he had promised to adhere to at the time of his initiation or baptism. If he does not obey these rules and violates them in his life then what is the use of his wearing the Yagyopavit in the first place? It would be deceitful and cheating one’s self. This is precisely the point here. The sacred thread is only an external sign indicating that the wearer occupies a noble stature amongst men, but if he does not live up to the expectations from a man who wears this insignia of holiness and purity then he is only committing a grave sin as he is defiling the very principles upon which the institution of the sacred thread is based.

The Yagyopavit consists of three interwoven threads, and it is therefore known as the *Trisutra*. It is worn around the neck or slung diagonally across the chest, from the left shoulder to the right side of the hip bone. The word *Sutra* in this term has great metaphysical meaning.



These three threads also stand for the three Gunas or qualities that Brahm possesses. These are the following—‘Sata Guna’, the ‘Raja Guna’ and the ‘Tama Guna’. They have been described in brief as note of verse no. 77 above.

The sacred thread actually consists of *nine fine threads* (Par Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 5; Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 27) which are intertwined into three strands, each strand having three fine interlocked threads, that are once again knitted together to make up the Yagyopavit or the sacred thread (Par Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 5).

The sacred thread symbolizes all the subtle aspects of creation, called the Tattwas. These Tattwas are variously said to number ninety-six, twenty-seven, nine etc., and the sacred thread encompasses all of them. It is, in fact, a representative of Brahm in entirety. These facts are explained in detail in the Atharva Veda’s Par Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 5, and Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 14-15.

The *Par Brahm Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, verse nos. 3-20 are entirely dedicated to the metaphysical importance of the symbol of the sacred thread and its spiritual value. The sacred thread is a symbol that stands at once for (i) Brahm represented by Pranav, the cosmic vibration or ethereal sound encapsulated in the word OM, (ii) for the Atma that is also known as Hans, the divine Swan, (iii) for the Fire, and (iv) for Gyan or truthful knowledge, wisdom, erudition and enlightenment about the Truth of the self and Brahm. Refer: Atharva Veda = Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 14-19, 27; Par Brahm Upanishad, verse nos. 3-14, 16-17.]

येन सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव । तत्सूत्रं धारयेद्योगी योगवित्तत्त्वदर्शनः ॥८३॥

yena sarvamidaṁ protaṁ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva /  
tatsūtraṁ dhārayedyogī yogavittattvadarśanaḥ // 83 //

83. [The term ‘Sutra’ is being further defined now, and its metaphysical importance and significance outlined.]

Just like the beads of a garland or a rosary are threaded together and held in place by the string running through them, the entire creation is bound and held in place with all its individual units interlocked to form a complex grid-lock or matrix by the hidden ‘truth’ running imperceptibly through them, and this ‘Truth’ is the ‘Sutra’ which is eternal and truthful essence of existence and the creation. [In other words, the subtle and esoteric but the most eclectic Absolute Truth—which is irrefutable and incontrovertible, which is eternal, infinite, imperishable, universal and uniform—in this creation is the entity that gives credence to this creation and makes its existence possible. In metaphysics this Absolute Truth is known as Brahm. It is this Brahm which is responsible for shaping this world and keeping its texture sustained. Brahm gives the world its meaning and shape. Without Brahm this world would fall apart and scatter haphazardly into non-entity and non-existence just like the garland or the rosary losing its meaning and existence if the string binding the flowers or the beads together is cut and the latter scatter around. The ‘Sutra’ is responsible for creation having any meaning. Otherwise, the numerous individual units of this creation would have remained scattered units having no meaning and importance. It is this Sutra symbolising Brahm or the universal consciousness running invisibly through the length and breadth of creation that not only binds the countless units together but also gives them their life and identity. So if one wishes to know the secret of this world as it exists in its present shape one must know about Brahm which is the hidden force

that has given the world or the creation its meaning, shape and existence just like the case that if one were to recognise an assortment of flowers as a garland or a collection of beads as a rosary one must understand that it is the string running through them that has held together these individual flowers or beads so that they come to be known or recognised as a garland or a rosary. Therefore, the very existence of this creation hinges around the Sutra symbolising Brahm.]

A wise and erudite ascetic is one who realises what this eclectic and most divine and holy Sutra representing the essential secret of existence is (which of course is Brahm, the Absolute Truth, and the cosmic Consciousness). He then enshrines it in his heart, in his inner being, with this understanding, with this wisdom, thereby giving the Sutra (representing Brahm) its due importance, honour, reverence and dignity. [That is, once having known and understood that it is the supreme transcendental Brahm which is the Absolute Truth in creation, a wise and enlightened spiritual aspirant should concentrate his attention on this Truth, and not allow himself to be buffeted (i.e. made restless by being deluded, misled or confused) by numerous ideas and notions, countless theories and doctrines, innemurable philosophies and schools of thoughts which only lead to utter vexation, confusion and perplexity. By concentrating upon one single path or goal it becomes very easy for him to reach it within the limited time span of this short life, and if he does not do so he would be like a man who keeps changing boats every now and then and ultimately sinks mid-stream before he reaches the other shore.] (83).

बहिः सूत्रं त्यजेद्विद्वान्योगमुत्तममास्थितः । ब्रह्मभावमिदं सूत्रं धारयेद्यः सचेतनः । धारणात्तस्य सूत्रस्य नोच्छिष्टो नाशुचिर्भवेत् ॥८४॥

bahiḥsūtram tyajedvidvānyogamuttamamāsthitaḥ /  
brahmabhāvamidaṁ sūtram dhārayedyah sacetanaḥ /  
dhāraṇāttasya sūtrasya nocchiṣṭo nāśucirbhavet // 84 //

84. A truly wise and learned man should discard the external form of the ‘Sutra’ (i.e. the gross form of the sacred thread or Yagyopavit, which is also called a Sutra, consisting of mere threads woven together into a sling put across the shoulder and the chest), and instead accept the divine principle that this ‘Sutra’ represents—as it is a symbolic form of Brahm, the divine and holy entity that is truthful, all-pervading, all-inclusive, eternal, infinite, supreme and transcendental. This is the true and real meaning of ‘Sutra’ that the spiritual aspirant should wear. It is the essence, the truth, the fundamental aspect and the primary form of the sacred thread, and it is the only form that would be on any spiritual benefit for the aspirant instead of merely wearing it just for the sake of doing so. [Whereas the Sutra made from ordinary thread is just that—‘ordinary’, the symbolism of acceptance of Brahm as the supreme Sutra makes one as glorious, divine and holy as Brahm himself—i.e. the aspirant becomes ‘extraordinary’. He becomes a personified form of Brahm if he is enlightened enough to inculcate all the good virtues that Brahm stands for. By wearing the Sutra on his body, the aspirant is openly declaring this fact that he has established Brahm on his gross body, and therefore as long as the Sutra is on his body he is obliged to honour its sanctity and act with consonant dignity so that the holy nature of the Sutra is not compromised with and its divinity is not demoted by any of his actions, deeds, words,

thoughts, behaviours etc. He has to be extra cautious about being righteous and noble because of the presence of the Sutra on his body.]

Such a Parivrajak (i.e. a Sanyasi) never becomes impure and defiled; he never gets demoted or falls from his exalted stature. [The wearing of the Yagyopavit is a visible sign that the wearer is of a high birth such as a Brahmin or some learned, holy and religious man. It is believed that as long as he wears this Yagyopavit, he is pure, holy and un-corrupt. But since this Yagyopavita is made from ordinary thread, it is subject to all the grossness, impurities, faults, shortcomings and impermanence that are associated with everything that is gross in this transient, faulty, mortal and perishable world. In short, the purity and holiness that the gross form of the Yagyopavita bestows upon the wearer is not permanent in nature because the former itself is not permanent. On the other hand, Brahm is an eternal, infinite, imperishable, truthful and divine entity, and therefore if one is wise enough to accept the Yagyopavit for his spiritual well-being then he must wear it with proper wisdom and understanding as to its symbolic meaning and its subtle import. It is only then that this Yagyopavit would be of any benefit for him and it would bestow holiness and purity to the wearer. Once this actually happens, the wearer becomes a living embodiment of Brahm.] (84).

सूत्रमन्तर्गतं येषां ज्ञानयज्ञोपवीतिनाम् । ते वै सूत्रविदो लोके ते च यज्ञोपवीतिनः ॥८५॥

sūtramantargataṃ yeṣāṃ jñānayaajñopavītinām /  
te vai sūtravido loke te ca yajñopavītinah // 85 //

85. A wise, erudite and enlightened Parivrajak (a Sanyasi) who has accepted the secret Truth and eclectic knowledge of the divine Brahm as the metaphoric Yagyopavit which he devotedly enshrines in his heart or wears it in his inner being is indeed the one who has understood the reality and the truth of this world as well as worn the Yagyopavit in the correct sense (85).

ज्ञानशिखा ज्ञाननिष्ठा ज्ञानयज्ञोपवीतिनः । ज्ञानमेव परं तेषां पवित्रं ज्ञानमुच्यते ॥८६॥

jñānaśikhino jñānaniṣṭhā jñānayaajñopavītinah /  
jñānameva param teṣāṃ pavitraṃ jñānamucyate // 86 //

86. A Parivrajak (Sanyasi) is one who wears or accepts Gyan (truthful and correct knowledge; wisdom, erudition and enlightenment about the Absolute Truth and the supreme transcendental Brahm; self and Brahm realisation) as a metaphoric Shikha or tuft of hair on his head (instead of the conventional hairs), who wears or accepts Gyan as the metaphoric Yagyopavit or the sacred thread worn on the body, and who remains established in the enlightenment, wisdom, awareness, holiness and purity that the auspicious attribute of Gyan provides him. [That is, instead of relying on the external signs of the Shikha and the Yagyopavit as marks and constant reminder of his acceptance of the path of Brahm, i.e. the path of truthfulness, righteousness, auspiciousness and nobility of thought and action, he accepts the fundamental essence of this knowledge and imbibes its basic values internally, integrating them with his inner being and his thought textures so that his entire life and his entire being become

an image of the glorious virtues that Brahm stands for. Holiness and divinity, purity and righteousness, auspiciousness and truthfulness become an integral, inseparable, effortless and natural part of his life and existence, and not something that is done with some bit of conscious and physical effort as is required when one has to keep his Shikha properly trimmed and the Yagyopavit properly cleaned.]

For such wise and enlightened aspirants, acquisition of Gyan is the best effort made in the direction of spiritual upliftment and attaining one's real goal in life. It is considered as the most purifying, dynamic, electrifying and empowering entity. [True and correct knowledge is the Sutra or key to the removal of darkness of ignorance and delusions. With Gyan it is easy for one to unravel the secrets of the enigmatic cosmic Brahm just like it is easy to unlock the treasury with the correct key to its lock. Gyan is a dynamic and powerful force which empowers the spiritual aspirant to see the reality and truth hidden from view under a thick cover of delusions leading to numerous misconceptions, misrepresentations, misinterpretations and misinformations. Thus, it is hard and almost impossible to become truly self-realised and Brahm-realised in the absence of this vital key or Sutra called Gyan. Gyan is an important and indispensable aid or tool to self-realisation and Brahm-realisation.] (86).

[Note—Refer Canto 4, verse no. 32.]

अग्नेरिव शिखा नान्या यस्य ज्ञानमयी शिखा । स शिखीत्युच्यते विद्वान्नेतरे केशधारिणः ॥८७॥

agneriva śikhā nānyā yasya jñānamayī śikhā /  
sa śikhītyucyate vidvānnetare keśadhāriṇaḥ // 87 //

87. Just like the Shikha (the tip of a lighted flame) is inseparable from the flame of a lighted candle and marks the tip or the highest point of the latter, a Parivrajak who has accepted Gyan as his symbolic Shikha (to the tuft of hair worn by an ascetic on his head), who has accepted the virtues of wisdom, self-realisation, enlightenment, erudition and knowledge as his main defining virtue and glorious characteristic, is indeed the one who can be said to have actually sported or worn this 'Shikha' in an honest and truthful sense. All the rest are simply called 'ordinary and perfunctory wearers of Shikha' (because they have not understood the profundity and the real meaning, significance and import of the Shikha and wearing it) (87).

[Note—The word *Shikha* has two meanings—one refers to the tip of the wick of a lighted candle which burns to produce the flame and its attendant light, and the second refers to the tuft of hair on the top of the ascetic's head which is also the highest point of his body and its apex.

In this instance, the aspirant's body is likened to a candle, and the knowledge that the aspirant has is like the light of this candle. What good is a candle if it does not show its light? Similarly, what good is the body if its mind is not soaked in knowledge? When the candle burns and gives out light, its physical body slowly melts away into nothingness; the body of the candle ultimately vanishes altogether when its wax is exhausted. The 'light' that the candle gives out also does not depend upon the length or thickness of the candle. Likewise, the light of Gyan or knowledge, wisdom, erudition, enlightenment and self-realisation that effuses from the ascetic does not depend the grossness of his physical body, its age, its physical fitness, its colour, birth, caste and race, and other such worldly considerations.

Just like the candle having any value and importance because of its ability to give light, the ascetic is known, respected and valued for the light of Gyan that he has.

Otherwise, he is no better than a candle which is unable to give any light for a variety of reasons, such as it being wet. The physical body of the candle is of no significance, and it is sought after only because the light emanating from the wick removes darkness. Similarly, the ascetic, or for that matter any man, is honoured, revered and remembered for the Gyan that he possesses, Gyan that not only removes the darkness within his own gross body but also of those around him. Here, the word ‘darkness’ refers to ignorance and delusions that mire the creature and prevents him from knowing the ‘truth and reality’.

This light of Gyan, or the light of knowledge and enlightenment, has its focal point in the head where the mind, the intellect, the faculty of discrimination, and the sub-conscious are located. In Yoga Upanishads it has been stressed that the ascetic experiences the eclectic feeling of ecstasy and bliss that comes with self-realisation when his Prans (vital winds) reach the forehead and the tip of the head by various meditating techniques. It is this tip of the head where the Shikha or the tuft of hair sported by the Sanyasi is located. This Shikha is therefore only a symbol or a mark to indicate that the person has the potential to light the world with his Gyan just like the wick of the candle lights up the surrounding when it is lighted. What good is the wick if it does not produce the flame that gives light? Similarly, what good is there in wearing the Shikha if the wearer does not have any Gyan in him, and he cannot benefit the society with knowledge and wisdom?

The light of knowledge or ‘Gyan’ that a wise Sanyasi possesses is his metaphoric Shikha because this virtue has its seat in the head, just as the light of the flame of the candle is present around its wick that is also located on the tip of the body of the candle.

A man without Gyan is a burden and worthless being just like a candle that cannot be lighted. Gyan is the high seat which distinguishes one man from another. It is Gyan which makes one a realised being and shine in this world as compared to others who lack Gyan and remain mired in the grave darkness of ignorance just like reptiles and other lowly animals who prefer living under crevices and inside caves. It is Gyan that acts as a catalyst for his spiritual well-being, his spiritual upliftment, his spiritual liberation and deliverance. The importance of Gyan vis-à-vis the Sanyasi is especially emphasised in Canto 4, verse no. 32.

Hence, a true Sanyasi or Parivrajak is one who has Gyan as an integral and inseparable part of his being just like the Shikha is of the body. This Gyan is the only element that makes him exalted, honourable, revered and distinguished from other human beings. Those who are not enlightened, those who are not aware of the ‘Truth’, those who are not self-realised, but still wear the Shikha just because they are supposed to wear it are therefore regarded as fools who do things just because others are doing it, and they cannot expect to derive any spiritual rewards by sporting the Shikha.

Refer verse no. 17 of this Canto 3 in this context.]

कर्मण्यधिकृता ये तु वैदिके ब्राह्मणादयः । तैर्विधायमिदं सूत्रं क्रियाङ्गं तद्धि वै स्मृतम् ॥८८॥

karmaṇyadhikṛtā ye tu vaidike brāhmaṇādayaḥ /  
tebhirbhāryamidaṁ sūtraṁ kriyāṅgaṁ taddhi vai smṛtam // 88 //

88. For those who engage in performance of formal Vedic rites and other religious rituals are required to wear the Yagyopavit (the sacred thread) as it is a necessary purifying accoutrement of such formal exercises. [But for a Sanyasi who is not required to engage himself in such formalities in the first place, there is no need and compulsion of wearing the sacred thread for him. His ‘Yagyopavit’ is his high state of

being Brahm and self realised because this sacred thread stand for Brahm, it is symbol of Brahm and nothing else.] (88).

[Note—Just like a Sanyasi sporting the Shikha without having Gyan is merely cheating himself and deceiving others, for he gains nothing more by sporting the single tuft of hair on his head than either having a thick lock of hairs on the head or shaving the hair completely, a Sanyasi does not need to wear the sacred thread because he is deemed to have become self and Brahm realised.

As had been noted elsewhere, he establishes the sacred fires inside his own body, and therefore performs the fire sacrifice internally instead of doing it externally. Since wearing of the sacred thread is necessary for doing the sacrifice externally, therefore it is not necessary for the Sanyasi who has already established the sacred fire inside his own self. This fact is endorsed in Canto 4, verse no. 37 of the present Upanishad.

Refer verse nos. 17, 90 and 91 of this present Canto 3 in this context.]

शिखा ज्ञानमयी यस्य उपवीतं च तन्मयम् । ब्राह्मण्यं सकलं तस्य इति ब्रह्मविदो विदुरिति ॥८९॥

śikhā jñānamayī yasya upavītaṃ ca tanmayam /  
brāhmaṇyaṃ sakalaṃ tasya iti brahmavido viduriti // 89 //

89. Those who are Brahm-realised aver that only a Parivrajak (a Sanyasi) who has accepted Brahm as his symbolic Shikha and Yagyopavit is indeed the enlightened and wise one who is fully infused with and completely soaked in the essence of Brahm. Indeed, he is a personification of Brahm, the supreme transcendental Divinity in creation in the form of the Absolute Truth and irrefutable Reality (89).

तदेतद्विज्ञाय ब्राह्मणः परिव्रज्य परिव्राडेकशाटी मुण्डोऽपरिग्रहः शरीरक्लेशासहिष्णुश्चेदथवा  
यथाविधिश्चेज्जातरूपधरो भूत्वा सपुत्रमित्रकलत्राप्तबन्धादीनि स्वाध्यायं सर्वकर्मणि संन्यस्यायं ब्रह्माण्डं  
च सर्वं कौपीनं दण्डमाच्छादनं च त्यक्त्वा द्वन्द्वसहिष्णुर्न शीतं न चोष्णं न सुखं न दुःखं न निद्रा न  
मानावमाने च षडूर्मिवर्जितो निन्दाहंकारमत्सरगर्वदम्भेर्ष्यासूयेच्छाद्वेषसुखदुःखकामक्रोधलोभमोहादीन्विसृज्य  
स्ववपुः शवाकारमिव स्मृत्वा स्वव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वमन्तर्बहिरमन्यमानः कस्यापि वन्दनमकृत्वा न नमस्कारो  
न स्वाहाकारो न स्वधाकारो न निन्दास्तुतिर्यादृच्छिको भवेद्यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टः सुवर्णादीन् परिग्रहेन्नावाहनं  
न विसर्जनं न मन्त्रं नामन्त्रं न ध्यानं नोपासनं न लक्ष्यं नालक्ष्यं न पृथक् नापृथक् न त्वन्यत्र  
सर्वत्रानिकेतः स्थिरमतिः शून्यागारवृक्षमूलदेवगृह  
तृणकूटकुलालशालाग्निहोत्रशालाग्निदिगन्तरनदीतटपुलिनभूगृहकन्दरनिर्झरस्थण्डिलेषु वने वा  
श्वेतकेतुः भुनिदाघः ऋषभदुर्वासः संवर्तकदत्तात्रेयः रैवतकवदव्यक्तलिङ्गोऽव्यक्ताचारो  
बालोन्मत्तपिशाचवदनुन्मत्तोन्मत्तवदाचरस्त्रिदण्डं शिक्यं पात्रं कमण्डलुं कटिसूत्रं कोपीनं च तत्सर्वं  
भूः स्वाहेत्यप्सु परित्यज्य ॥९०॥

tadetadvijñāya brāhmaṇaḥ parivrajya parivrāḍekaśāṭī  
muṇḍo'parigrahaḥ śārīrākṣēśāsahiṣṇuścedathavā  
yathāvidhiścejjātarūpadharo bhūtvā saputramitrakalatrāpta  
bandhādvini svādhyāyaṃ sarvakarmāṇi samnyasyāyaṃ  
brahmāṇḍaṃ ca sarvaṃ kaupīnaṃ daṇḍamācchādanam  
ca tyaktvā dvandvasahiṣṇurna śītaṃ na coṣṇam na sukham

na duḥkhaṃ na nidrā na mānāvamāne ca ṣaḍūrmivarjito  
 nindāhaṅkāramatsaragarvadambherṣyāsūyecchādveṣa  
 sukhaduḥkhakāmakrodhalobhamohādīnvisṛjya svavapuḥ  
 śavākāramiva smṛtvā svavyatiriktaṃ sarvamantarbahiramanyamānaḥ  
 kasyāpi vandanamakṛtvā na namaskāro na svāhākāro  
 na svadhākāro na nindāstutiryādṛcchiko bhavedyadṛcchā  
 lābhasantuṣṭaḥ suvarṇādīnna parigrahennāvāhanaṃ na visarjanaṃ  
 na mantraṃ nāmantraṃ na dhyānaṃ nopāśanaṃ na lakṣyaṃ nālakṣyaṃ  
 na pṛthak nāpṛthak na tvanyatra sarvatrāniketaḥ sthiramatiḥ  
 śūnyāgāravr̥kṣamūladevagṛhatṛṇakūṭakulāśālāgnihoṭra  
 śālāgnidigantaranadītaṭapulinabhūgrhakandaranirjharasthaṇḍileṣu vane vā  
 śvetaketurbhunidāgharṣabhadurvāsaḥsaṃvartakadattātreyaraivataka  
 vadavyaktaliṅgo'vyaktācāro bālonmattapiśācavadanunmattonmatta  
 vadācaramstridaṇḍaṃ śikyaṃ pātraṃ kamaṇḍaluṃ kaṭisūtraṃ ca tatsarvaṃ  
 bhūḥsvāhetyapsu parityajya // 90 //

90. [Verse nos. 90-92 have an uncanny resemblance to verse nos. 28-76 of this present Canto 3. They are a sort of recapitulation to summarise the things already said previously. This phenomenon is a constant feature of this Upanishad where many things have been repeated often.]

A Brahmin (i.e. a wise and learned person), after having acquainted himself of all the codes and tenets of Sanyas, its detailed rules and regulations, should make a firm resolve to take the vows of Sanyas, and leave his home.

He should henceforth wear only one piece of cloth to cover his body, shave off the hair from his head, and should not attempt or desire to accumulate any thing or any material of any kind whatsoever.

If it is not possible for him to cope with physical discomfort beyond a certain limit then it is permitted for him to keep wearing the piece of cloth that covers the lower part of his body. If he can, it is best advised that as a Sanyasi (a noun used for a person who has taken the stern vows of Sanyas or renunciation and detachment from anything related with this world) he should even discard this piece of cloth and instead remain completely naked. This is the proper system for the Sanyas or a renunciation way of life. [For such an enlightened man, the sky or the firmament is the all-covering garment. Refer also to verse no. 91 of the present Canto 3.]

He must snap all relations with everyone such as his friends, companions, son, wife, elders and other kith and kin. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 32, 70; and Canto 4, verse no. 2). Instead, he should wander alone like a friar or mendicant. [Refer Canto 2, verse no. 1; Canto 3, verse nos. 31, 54-56, 59-60, 76. This shows that wandering alone or staying alone is very necessary for the Sanyasi. This helps him to avoid all sorts of restlessness and vexations that come to the Spirit when one keeps company of any kind.]

Excepting the study of the scriptures as convenient and observing the duties as prescribed in the Vedas, he is expected to distance himself from all other obligations of this mortal world, become absolutely non-involved with this material world at large, and snap all his links with it.

The only things he can keep with himself are the Kopin (loin-cloth), the Danda (an ascetic's staff), and the piece of cloth to cover the upper part of his body or which is used to protect him against cold and heat.

He must observe exemplary tolerance and fortitude, treating everything and everyone equally with the greatest of equanimity and evenness of mind. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 34.]

He must calmly bear all sorts of provocations, mental agitations and physical discomfort with the greatest of stoicism, and remain unruffled and poised under the greatest of adversities. He shouldn't be bothered by either heat or cold. He shouldn't ever desire comfort and pleasures, nor should he be bothered by any kind of restlessness, both mental and physical. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 37-39.]

He should not even pay attention to sleep. [That is, if he cannot sleep due to some reason, then he is not expected to feel restless and worn out. Similarly, if he wishes to sleep as a natural urge of the body, then he should not be overly worried about the timing, and allow his body rest by sleeping till it wants. But this does not mean that he should develop the habit of being lazy, as this would interfere with the need for him to spend the most of his time on meditation and contemplation.]

He should treat honour and dishonour, praise and insult with stoicity and equanimity. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 40-43.]

He must never be affected by the six Urmis. [Refer also Canto 7, verse no. 1. According to Mudgalo-panishad, 4/7 of the Rig Veda tradition, the six delusions, called 'Urmi', that create fear, sorrows, agonies, sufferings and pains to a creature are the following:--(1) hunger, (2) thirst, (3) grief, (4) Moha (worldly attachments, illusions, entrapments), (5) horrors of old age, and (6) death.]

He should discard all Vikaars (or impurities, shortcomings or faults) that taint a creature's inner self and affect his basic immaculate nature. These faults are the following—Ninda (finding faults with others and criticism), Matsarya (jealously, envy, anger, wrath), Ahankar (pride, ego), Garva (vanity, self-praise, haughtiness, arrogance), Dambha (deceit, conceit, impersonation, falsehood), Irshya (jealousy, malice, ill-will and intolerance of the other person's successes and achievements), Suya (finding unnecessary faults with others), Ichha (having desire, wishes and aspirations), Dwesh (having ill-will and keeping malice), Sukh-Dukh (the feeling or notion of having happiness, comfort and pleasure on the one hand, or having pain, sorrow, grief and agony on the other hand), Kaam (lust, passion), Krodh (anger, wrathfulness and vengeance), Lobh (greed, rapacity), Moha (attachment, longing, endearment) etc. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 33, 35; Canto 4, verse nos. 5-6; Canto 7, verse no. 1]

He should treat his physical gross body as being good as dead (i.e. he must not pay any attention about the comfort or discomfort of the body), and should accept only the Atma (the pure consciousness residing inside the body) as the only entity worth accepting and thinking about. [That is, instead of worrying about the fate of his body and being pre-occupied with its demands, a wise Sanyasi should instead be concerned about his spiritual welfare and how to ensure that his Atma finds peace and tranquillity that it deserves. The focus of his mind should be the Atma and not the body. The lowly nature of the body is emphasised in verse nos. 46-48 of Canto 3, and verse nos. 25-27 of Canto 4. ]

Since he accepts only the Atma, the pure consciousness, as the supreme entity in this world, he should not bow before anyone else. Similarly, he should not get involved in formal rites and rituals such as doing religious sacrifices or offering oblations to the spirits of dead ancestors.

He should neither submit before anyone else (except the Atma), and therefore should not make any humble requests for anything to anyone nor become annoyed if



denied anything by anyone. Hence, he should not speak ill of anyone nor should he praise anyone.

He must roam around freely alone, without encountering any kind of encumbrances. [He must not keep any company, and never get involved in any relationships; he must not accumulate any material things.]

He must be satisfied with whatever food is made available as a will of the Lord. [That is, he must learn to control his hunger and taste, and instead be contented whatever comes his way. Refer also to verse nos. 38, 62-63 and 92 of the present Canto 3.]

He must never keep (or hoard) any kind of gems or jewellery or golden ornaments with him. [That is, he must not have anything to do with material wealth.]

He should be completely neutral and dispassionate, having exemplary equanimity and highest degree of evenness in his approach. Hence, he should neither invite anyone nor tell anyone to go; he should neither use any of the Mantras nor abandon them. He must not even do any specific forms of worship such as Dhyān and Upāsana—or meditating upon any deity or worshipping it.

He should have no specific aim or goal, and neither should he be aimless and without any target in life. [Having no aim or goal would make him mentally and physically free from the overbearing burden of having to strive hard to reach that goal or achieve that aim. On the other hand, it does not mean that he is absolutely aimless and drifting along like a worthless vagrant or a vagabond in life. Indeed his single noble aim and divine goal in life is to seek Mukti and Moksha, or liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation for his self; it is to attain the ultimate source of eternity, bliss, felicity and beatitude in the form of Brahm. Having no other worldly aims or aspirations, such an aspirant can preserve his energy and divert it to attain this single and eclectic goal in life.]

He should develop such a high degree of aloofness, neutrality and dispassion that it does not matter to him whether anyone stays with him or accompanies him, or whether he remains alone or has some company. In fact, he is oblivious to such things.

Similarly, he should not ask to be allowed to stay at any one place, nor should he request to be allowed to go somewhere else. [That is, he must not adhere to any fixed place or protocol, and can stay anywhere he wishes and as long as he wants to. When he wants to move out and go somewhere else, he need not observe formalities of requesting permission to move, but just move out on his own free will. That is, he should be totally and completely independent and freed from the obligation of having to adhere to any formalities and niceties of formal behaviour in this world. ]

Such a wise Sanyasi should not have any hermitage or dwelling of his own.

His mind and intellect must always be steady and under strict control.

For shelter, he can stay in an abandoned house, the base of a large tree (i.e. under its shade), a temple or shrine, a thatched hut, a potter's place, a spot in the south-east corner of a place where fire sacrifice is done, a place which is either close to the banks of a river or some low lying piece of land near it, a hole in a mound of earth or a cave in a mountain, a platform near a waterfall or some worship altar or pit where some sort of sacrifice was offered, and in a forest.

Some of the exalted and highly realised Sanyasis who were counted as one of the greatest of sages of all times never accepted and wore any external signs of Sanayas, and neither did they reveal their exalted stature and mystical authority and powers to anyone, but were nevertheless highly realised, enlightening, wise and spiritually liberated souls, and are the following—Ribhu, Shwetketu, Nidagh,

Rishabha, Samvartak, Durvasa, Dattatreya and Raivatak. [Refer Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 7, verse no. 3. This Upanishad is the 6<sup>th</sup> one of the Atharva Veda tradition.]

An exalted Sanyasi should behave like an innocent child or like someone possessed by a spirit. In spite of being highly realised, wise, enlightened, poised, stable in his mind and thoughts, and enabled with stupendous mystical powers and authority, he should however behave in an erratic, unpredictable, irrational and idiotic manner. [This behaviour ensures that people avoid him and he is left alone in peace. This gives him the much desired tranquillity, peace and serenity that would be impossible to achieve should the world become aware of his inherent mystical powers and spiritual achievements, for then the Sanyasi would be hounded by favour-seekers and surrounded by those who would plead with them to alleviate their worldly problems.]

When he reaches a higher level of Sanyas and Brahm realisation, he should discard even the bare necessities of life that he had with him till now, such as the Tridand (the stick or staff), the plate for food, the sling bag, the water pot, the waist band and the loin cloth. This is done by saying 'Bhu Swaha' and discarding them in some water body nearby. [The Mantra 'Bhu Swaha' means that I am offering all these possessions of mine to the Earth. The term 'Swaha' is used while making offerings to the sacred fire during formal fire sacrifices. So, when the Sanyasi offers his possessions to water by saying Swaha, it becomes equivalent to offering them to the sacred fire during formal fire sacrifice and acquires the same sanctity. Refer verse no. 79, last stanza.] (90).

कटिसूत्रं च कौपीनं दण्डं वस्त्रं कमण्डलुं । सर्वमप्सु विसृज्याथ जातरूपधरश्चरेत् ॥९१॥

kaṭisūtram ca kauopīnam daṇḍam vastram kamaṇḍalum /  
sarvamapsu visrjyātha jatarūpadharaścaret //91 //

91. A Parivrajak should discard all external signs of Sanyas such as the waist-band, the loin-cloth, the staff, the single piece of cloth which he uses to wrap his body, and the water-pot by respectfully immersing them in any water body (such as a river or lake or pond). Thereafter, he should roam around naked in the way he was originally born and which is the truthful form of his body sans all external paraphernalia (with the eclectic notion that he is wearing the sky as his garment) [Refer verse no. 90 of Canto 3.] (91).

आत्मानमन्विच्छेद्यथा जातरूपधरो निर्द्वन्द्वो निष्परिग्रहस्तत्त्वब्रह्ममार्गे सग्यक्सम्पन्नः शुद्धमानसः प्राणसंधारणार्थं यथोक्तकाले करपात्रेणान्येन वा याचिताहारमाहरन् लाभालाभे समो भूत्वा निर्ममः शुक्लध्यानपरायणोऽध्यात्मनिष्ठः शुभाशुभकर्मनिर्मूलनपरः संन्यस्य पूर्णानन्दैकबोधस्तद्ब्रह्माहमस्मीति ब्रह्मप्राणवमनुस्मरन्भ्रमरकीटन्यायेन शरीरत्रयमुत्सृज्य संन्यासेनैव देहत्यागं करोति स कृतकृत्यो भवतीत्युपनिषत् ॥९२॥

ātmānamanvicchedyathā jatarūpadharo nirdvandvo  
niṣparigrahaśtattvabrahmamārge samyak saṁpannaḥ  
śuddhamānasaḥ prāṇasandhāraṇārthaṁ yathoktakāle karapātreṇānyena vā  
yācitāhāramāharan lābhalābhe samo bhūtvā nirmamaḥ

śukladhyānaparāyaṇo'dhyātmaniṣṭhaḥ śubhāśubhakarmanirmūlanaparah  
 samnyasya pūrṇānandaikabodhastadbrahmāhamasmīti  
 brahmapraṇavamānusmaranbhramarakīṭanyāyena śārīratrayamutsrjya  
 samnyāsenaiḥ dehatyāgaṃ karoti sa kṛtakṛtyo bhavatītyupaniṣat // 92 //

92. He should constantly, consistently and persistently meditate and contemplate upon his Atma which is pure conscious and his true 'self' (with the eclectic notion that this Atma is the supreme Brahm residing in his inner being).

Remaining without any clothes or coverings, he must steadfastly bear with all sorts of restlessness and resist all temptations; he should not at all be affected by any of them. He must not accumulate anything of any kind. Instead, he should be firmly established in the path of Gyan (truthful knowledge) which enlightens a man about the Atma that is his pure consciousness as well as the supreme transcendental Brahm that is the universal cosmic Consciousness.

He must keep his mind absolutely free from all corruptions and impurities.

In order to protect his Pran (vital life factors present inside the body), he should accept the bare necessary and whatever food that comes his way without specifically asking anybody for it (i.e. without specifying the type of food that he would prefer, or that he needs it at all). It is also necessary to accept food at a fixed time (as this helps to maintain a steady regime and promotes good health by regulating hunger and digestion as compared to eating haphazardly and at random times). He must accept food in the cupped palms of his hands and eat directly from it (treating them as a natural pot). He may also use some other pot (such as a clay pot) that is easily available at the time.

Treating Laabh (gain) and Haani (loss) alike, he should disassociate himself from all Mamta (attachments and longings).

He should only meditate and contemplate upon the truthful and eternal supreme Brahm at all times.

He should constantly, consistently and persistently concentrate his mind on matters pertaining to the Atma, and think of nothing else.

Adjudicating and discriminating between what is good and auspicious and what is not, he must always strive for the upliftment of his Atma (i.e. his pure and truthful 'self') and abandon everything else. He must abandon all material things and sense objects of this world.

Having been soaked in the eclectic and sublime thoughts of Brahm which is the only blissful, supreme and transcendental divine entity in creation, when he has witnessed the subtle presence of this Brahm in his inner self and has realised the truth of the axiomatic maxim 'I am Brahm', he becomes firmly established in this eclectic Truth (i.e. he is convinced about the truth of Brahm, and his Atma being this Brahm personified). Like the insect that is always thinking about the large black bee because of the latter's constant humming over the former, a realised spiritual aspirant should always think of Brahm revealed in the cosmic sound called OM that resonates through his being. [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 22 and 66 also. The black bee captures an insect or a worm and constantly hums over it for long time. The resonating hum emanating from the buzzing bee so much overwhelms the humble and captive insect or worm that the latter forgets about its own nature and turns mentally into a black bee! The poor creature begins to think of nothing else but the buzz of the bee. It is mentally metamorphosed into a bee, and loses its own individuality as an insect or a worm. Likewise, when the spiritual aspirant constantly thinks of Brahm, when he constantly meditates upon Brahm using the Mantra OM as a medium for such meditation, a

method prescribed in all the Upanishads dealing with Yoga, a deep resonance is heard in his mind, and this is the cosmic sound of OM that begins to reverberate in his nerves and veins so much so that his entire inner-self is submerged in the resonance created by the sound of OM. This OM is a sound manifestation of the cosmic Consciousness, and so when the meditating person begins to hear this cosmic sound of OM in his nerves and veins, he is said to experience the titillation and ecstasy that comes with witnessing the cosmic Consciousness flowing inside his own body through his nerves and veins. This gives him the experience that comes with Brahm-realisation because the cosmic Consciousness represented by the vibrations created by the sound of OM is another name of Brahm. Refer also to Canto 4, verse no. 38, and Canto 5, verse no. 66.]

A Parivrajak is expected to completely abandon all sense of pride or ego as well as attachment with the three aspects of his body (which are the gross, subtle and causal bodies)<sup>1</sup> along with all other possessions he has, whether tangible or intangible, before he leaves his body in physical terms (i.e. before he dies). [This complete detachment and highest degree of renunciation ensures his final salvation and deliverance. His Atma would no longer yearn to take another birth so as to enjoy the sense organs of the body.]

A Sanyasi (Parivrajak) who adopts all the aforesaid methods and principles of Sanyas (renunciation) becomes fulfilled and truly liberated. Verily, this is what this great Upanishad affirms (92).

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#### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 4

[This Canto is an extension of the previous Canto 3 as it continues with the narration in detail of the importance and the due process of accepting the vows of Sanyas. Canto 5 would further elaborate what is being said in the present Canto.]

॥ चतुर्थोपदेशः ॥

त्यक्त्वा लोकांश्च वेदांश्च विषयानिन्द्रियाणि च । आत्मन्येव स्थितो यस्तु स याति परमां गतिम् ॥१॥

tyaktvā lokāṃśca vedāṃśca viṣayānindriyāṇi ca /  
ātmanyeva sthito yastu sa yāti paramāṃ gatim // 1 //

1. An Yati (ascetic or Sanyasi or Parivrajak) who abandons all contacts with this world, abandons even the Vedas (i.e. their ritualistic practices, but it does not mean to demean them in any way or restrict their study), pays no attentions to enjoyment of the pleasures of the sense objects, and has broken free from being dependent upon the sense organs of the body and the need for their gratification, and instead remains focussed only on the spiritual upliftment of his Atma (soul; the true 'self')—only such an Yati attains the most exalted spiritual stature or the supreme destination of the soul

called ‘Param Gati’. [The word ‘Param’ means supreme, the most exalted, the highest, and the best, while the word ‘Gati’ means goal, destination or fate of a creature; result of an effort or deed, whether that result is favourable when it is defined as a reward or a ‘good Gati’, or unfavourable when it is regarded as a punishment or a ‘bad Gati’.] (1).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse no. 32, and Canto 5, verse no. 26.]

नामगोत्रादिवरणं देशं कालं श्रुतं कुलम् । वयो वृत्तं शीलं ख्यापयेन्नैव सद्यतिः ॥२॥

nāmagotrādivaraṇaṁ deśaṁ kālaṁ śrutaṁ kulam /  
yayo vṛttaṁ vrataṁ śīlaṁ khyāpayennaiva sadyatiḥ // 2 //

2. An exalted and realised Sanyasi should never disclose anything about himself such as his name, clan or caste, his country of origin or region to where he belongs, his age, his scriptural knowledge, his general condition (such as whether he is sick or healthy, aged or young, rich or poor, of low or high birth, a professional or layman etc.), the codes of conduct he prefers to follow, the vows of abstinence and fasting that he observes, and how humble he is. [If he does so it would be tantamount to advertising himself, and it would not only stoke his ego or the pains of his past life, but also defeat the very purpose for which he had taken to Sanyas in the first place.] (2).

[Note—Refer verse nos. 33-34 of the present Canto 4.]

न संभाषेत्स्त्रियं कांचित्पूर्वदृष्टं च न स्मरेत् । कथां च वर्जयेत्तासां न पश्येल्लिखितामपि ॥३॥

na sambhāṣetstriyaṁ kāñcitpūrvadr̥ṣṭāṁ ca na smaret /  
kathāṁ ca varjayettāsāṁ na paśyellikhitāmapi // 3 //

3. He should never talk with any woman under any circumstance. He should never think of or remember about any woman with whom he has had any contact or acquaintance in his earlier phase of life, and neither should he keep their pictures with him nor allow himself to talk about them (3).

एतच्चतुष्टयं मोहात्स्त्रीणामाचरतो यतेः । चित्तं विक्रियतेऽवश्यं तद्विकारात्प्रणश्यति ॥४॥

etaccatuṣṭayaṁ mohātstrīṇāmācarato yateḥ /  
cittaṁ vikriyate‘vaśyaṁ tadvikārātpṛaṇaśyati // 4 //

4. To talk with any woman, to remember any woman, to have any discussion about any woman, and to view any picture of any woman—certainly a man who does these four things out of Moha (which is to have attachment with and longing for something) is bound to develop some or the other kind of Vikars (impurity, corruption, taint) in his mind and sub-conscious, and they would definitely prove to be his undoing and destroy his elevated stature as a Sanyasi (4).

[Note—In this context of what has been said in verse nos. 3-4, refer also to verse nos. 25-29 of the present Canto 4, as well as to verse no. 64 of Canto 3, and verse nos. 35-36 of Canto 6.]

तृष्णा क्रोधोऽनृतं माया लोभमोहौ प्रियाप्रिये । शिल्पं व्याख्यानयोगश्च कामो रागपरिग्रहः ॥५॥  
अहंकारो ममत्वं च चिकित्सा धर्मसाहसम् । प्रायश्चित्तं प्रवासश्च मन्त्रौषधपराशिषः । प्रतिषिद्धानि चैतानि  
सेवमानो ब्रजेदधः ॥६॥

trṣṇā krodho'nṛtaṃ māyā lobhamohau priyāpriye /  
śilpaṃ vyākhyānayogaśca kāmo rāgaparigrahaḥ // 5 //  
ahaṅkāro mamatvaṃ ca cikitsā dharmasāhasam /  
prāyaścittaṃ pravāsaśca mantrauṣadhagarāśiṣaḥ /  
pratiṣiddhāni caitāni sevamāno vrajedadhaḥ // 6 //

5-6. For a Sanyasi, all the following are prohibited—Trishna (to have desire and yearning for something), Krodh (anger, wrath and vengeance), Jhutha (falsehood, conceit, deceit), Maya (delusory effects of the world), Moha (longing, desire, attachment), Lobh (greed, avarice, rapacity), Priya-Apriya (to treat something or someone as loving and dear, and the other as being the opposite), Shilpkala (craftsmanship), Vyakhyan-Yog (to give discourse or lecture to others), Kaam (to have desires, lust, yearnings, passions etc.), Raag (to have mental desire or affection for anything), Parigraha (accumulation of anything such as material objects), Ahankar (self pride, ego), Mamamatva (to be emotionally and mentally attached with something and love for it), Chikitsa (giving medical advise such as on use of herbs), Dharma-Saahas (to show valour in the name of religion), Prayaschit (to do any kind of repentance, penance or atonement for some misdeed), Pravaas (to stay at any one place), the use of Mantra (i.e. to use any other Mantra except the all-inclusive and universally divine Mantra known as OM to aid in one's spiritual progress), to give Visha (poison anyone or do something that harms him severally), and to bless others employing the mystical powers that the Sanyasi possesses (5-6).

[Note—It would be observed that all these things have a negative impact on the mind and are related to this material world, and if one indulges in them then he cannot be categorised as a holy man a Sanyasi is expected to be. Any taints or impurities on his character would make him fall from his highly elevated spiritual stature; it would be demeaning for him and detrimental to his spiritual progress. Even a man who is still living as a householder is advised by the scriptures to avoid these negative traits, so naturally they are forbidden for a true Sanyasi who has renounced this world and all its characterising features.

Refer Canto 3, verse no. 90.]

आगच्छ गच्छ तिष्ठेति स्वागतं सुहृदोऽपि वा । सम्माननं च न ब्रूयान्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ॥७॥

āgaccha gaccha tiṣṭheti svāgataṃ suhrdo'pi vā /  
sanmānanaṃ ca na brūyānmunirmokṣaparāyaṇaḥ // 7 //

7. A wise and enlightened Sanyasi who is always striving to attain Moksha (i.e. seeking final emancipation and salvation for himself) should not invite or welcome even his well-wisher, and neither should he tell him to go away. He should not tell him 'come, you're welcome' or 'go please'. [That is, he should be absolutely indifferent, stoic, neutral, detached and dispassionate. If anyone comes to him he shows no special attention to the guest, and similarly if he wants to go away the Sanyasi must not ask him to stay even for a second.] (7).

प्रतिग्रहं न गृह्णीयान्नैव चान्यं प्रदापयेत् । प्रेरयेद्वा तया भिक्षुः स्वप्नेऽपि न कदाचन ॥८॥

pratigrahaṃ na grhṇīyānnaiva cānyaṃ pradāpayet /  
prerayedvā tayā bhikṣuḥ svapne'pi na kadācana // 8 //

8. He should not accept any donation of material things given to him even in his dreams. ['In his dreams' is a figure of speech to mean 'never, under any circumstance'.]

He should not tell the donor to give it to someone else instead of him or on his behalf, and neither should he force anyone to give donation or accept it such donation (8).

जायाभ्रातृसुतादीनां बन्धूना च शुभाशुभम् । श्रुत्वा दृष्ट्वा न कम्पेत शोकहर्षौ त्यजेद्यतिः ॥९॥

jāyābhrāṭṛsutādīnāṃ bandhūnāṃ ca śubhāśubham /  
śrutvā dr̥ṣṭvā na kampeta śokaharṣau tyajedyatiḥ // 9 //

9. He should never be mentally and emotionally moved or get distracted from his chosen spiritual path of Sanyas upon hearing any good or bad news about any person, either a female or a male, who was very dear to him in his early life, such as his kith and kin. Likewise, he should never be affected by a feeling of happiness on seeing them happy and prosperous, nor get emotionally upset by seeing their miserable condition.

He must abandon all emotions or feelings, such as that of happiness or gladness on the one hand, and of grief and sorrows on the other hand, for all times to come (9).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 25, 44.]

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाः । अनौद्धत्यमदीनत्वं प्रसादः स्थैर्यमार्जवम् ॥१०॥

अस्नेहो गुरुशुश्रूषा श्रद्धा क्षान्तिर्दमः शमः । उपेक्षा धैर्यमाधुर्ये तितिक्षा करुणा तथा ॥११॥

हीनस्तथा ज्ञानविज्ञाने योगो लघ्वशनं धृतिः । एष स्वधर्मा विख्यातो यतीनां नियतात्मनाम् ॥१२॥

ahiṃsā satyamasteyabrahmacaryāparigrahaḥ /  
anauddhattyamadīnatvaṃ prasādaḥ sthairyamārjavam // 10 //  
asneho guruśuśrūṣā śraddhā kṣāntirdamaḥ śamaḥ /  
upekṣā dhairyamādhurye titikṣā karuṇā tathā // 11 //  
hṛistathā jñānavijñāne yogo laghvaśanaṃ dhṛtiḥ /  
eṣa svadharmo vikhyāto yatīnāṃ niyatātmanām // 12 //

10-12. The following are the best principles to be followed by a wise and enlightened Sanyasi—Ahinsa (non-violence in all aspects, physical, mental and emotional), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (observance of strict self-control, abstinence), Aparigraha (giving away of assets or possessions; non-accumulation; renunciation of the highest degree) [10], to become calmed, rested and peaceful, and stop being arrogant, rude, reckless or impertinent, not to become too humble to the

extent of showing subservience or lowliness in the front of anyone no matter how senior he is, to remain always cheerful and happy (and never regret at becoming a Sanyasi or lament at inconveniences that are encountered), to be steady and unwavering in his chosen path, to have simplicity of demeanours, not to have any sort of affection for or attachment with anyone, to selflessly serve the Guru (the moral preceptor), to have the virtues of Shradha (steady faith and firm conviction), Kshama (forgiveness), Dam and Sham (self-restraint of the sense organs as well as the mind), Upeksha (to treat with neglect all relationships; to be non-attached, non-involved and exemplarily dispassionate), Dhairya (to have patience, forbearance and resilience), Madhurya (to have sweetness of demeanours and speech), Titiksha (to have forbearance, tolerance, fortitude), Karuna (to have compassion, mercy, kindness) [11], Lajja (to feel ashamed at doing anything inauspicious and unrighteous and ignoble for a spiritual aspirant), to be diligent in pursuing the correct path and be interested in the pursuit of Gyan and Vigyan (enlightenment, wisdom and truthful knowledge that can be verified by personal experience), eating with restraint, and Dhriti (courage and patience developed by steadiness of mind and thoughts) [12]. (10-12).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 21, 33-35, 70-76 in the context of the present verse nos. 10-12.]

निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थः सर्वत्र समदर्शनः । तुरीयः परमो हंसः साक्षान्नारायणो यतिः ॥१३॥

nirdvandvo nityasattvasthaḥ sarvatra samadarśanaḥ /  
turiyaḥ paramo haṁsaḥ sāksānnārāyaṇo yatiḥ // 13 //

13. A Parivrajak who is free from all sorts of turmoil, restlessness and agitations, who is always sincere, diligent and steadfast in following the principles of Sata Gunas (noble and auspicious virtues), who has fortitude, dispassion and equanimity of approach towards everything in life, and who remains in a perpetual state of Turiya (transcendental state of conscious existence)—indeed, such a Parivrajak is called a Paramhans (a highly evolved state of renunciation which makes a man absolutely pure and incorrupt), and he is a living personification of the supreme Lord Narayan (Vishnu) himself (13).

एकरात्रं वसेद्ग्रामे नगरे पञ्चात्रकम् । वर्षाभ्योऽन्यत्र वर्षासु मासांश्च चतुरो वसेत् ॥१४॥

ekarātraṁ vasedgrāme nagare pañcarātrakam /  
varṣābhyo'nyatra varṣāsu māsāṁśca caturo vaset // 14 //

14. Except the rainy season, a Parivrajak should stay in a small village for one night only, and in a big town or city for five nights only. But during the rainy season he can stay for four months at a place (14).

[Note—In the context of what is being ordained here, one should refer to verse nos. 15-16 and 19-20 of this Canto 4 below, as well as to verse nos. 31, 56-59 of Canto 3 earlier. Refer also to verse no. 1 of Canto 7.]

द्विरात्रं न वसेद्ग्रामे भिक्षुर्यदि वसेत्तदा । रागादयः प्रसज्येरंस्तेनासौ नारकी भवेत् ॥१५॥



dvirātram vā vasedgrāme bhikṣuryadi vasettadā /  
rāgādayaḥ prasajyeraṁstenāsau nārakī bhavet // 15 //

15. A Parivrajak should not stay in one village for more than one night. If he does stay then it is possible that his inner being might get influenced by certain emotional or mental taints such as developing Raag (getting attracted to anything and beginning to have affection for it) etc. [And this eventuality would be his undoing and detrimental to his spiritual progress. He would lose whatever moral ground he might have covered till then.]

Should any worldly faults ever taint him, he slides down and heads for hell. [Instead of moving steadily upwards towards his final freedom from all faults associated with the body and this material world to find emancipation and salvation for himself, a Sanyasi who allows even a slight speck of corruption to taint his moral fabric which is so scarred by its negative effects and its attendant grossness that he is pulled down by it. As a consequence of the latter, all his earlier austerities and penances go to waste.] (15).

ग्रामान्ते निर्जने देशे नियतात्माऽनिकेतनः । पर्यट्कीटवद्भूमौ वर्षास्वेकत्र संवसेत् ॥६॥

grāmānte nirjane deśe niyatātmā'niketanaḥ /  
paryaṭekīṭavadbhūmau varṣāsvekatra saṁvaset // 16 //

16. He should stay outside a village (or populated areas) in a secluded, peaceful, calm and serene location. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 60.]

He should exercise great control over his mind and sense organs. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 68.]

He must not construct any permanent shelter such as a hut or a monastery for the purpose of his dwelling. Just like creatures of Nature such as insects and worms wander around everywhere on the face of the earth without getting attached to any one fixed place, he too must roam around for eight months of a year. He can stay at a single place only for four months during the rainy season. [Refer verse no. 14 and 19 also of the present Canto 4.] (16).

एकवासा अवासा वा एकदृष्टिरलोलुपः । अदूषयन्सतां मार्गं ध्यानयुक्तो महीं चरेत् ॥७॥

ekavāsā avāsā vā ekadrṣṭiralolupaḥ /  
adūṣayansatām mārgaṁ dhyānayukto mahīm caret // 17 //

17. A Parivrajak should wear only a single piece of cloth over his body, or remain naked. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 31, stanza no. 1.]

His sight or view should not be fickle and jump from object to object, but instead it should be fixed on one target or goal that he has chosen in his life as a Sanyasi. [That is, he must remain focused on his spiritual goal and not allow himself to be distracted by so many charms of this fascinating but entrapping world. Having restless eyes show that his mind is fickle. Spiritual success is not at all possible with an unsteady mind. Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 31, 65-68.]

He must never get hooked or attracted towards enjoyment of sensual pleasures and objects of this material world; he must never do anything that would tarnish the holy and eclectic path shown by his predecessors. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 36. By becoming a Sanyasi and avowing his faith in this holy institution, if he does anything that is not expected from such people, it would have a catastrophic cascading effect on the institution of Sanyas and society would begin to look down upon all Sanyasis because of the misdemeanours of this single person. People would treat with disdain the entire community of ascetics, monks, mendicants and friars because they have had a bitter experience of this single individual.]

So, keeping guard and remaining on constant vigil, he must roam around on the face of the earth freely, always thinking only of the Supreme Being. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 53.] (17).

शुचौ देशे सदा भिक्षुः स्वधर्ममनुपालयन् । पर्यटेत सदा योगी वीक्षयन्वसुधातलम् ॥१८॥

śucau deśe sadā bhikṣuḥ svadharmamanupālayan /  
paryāṭeta sadā yogī vīkṣayanvasudhātalam // 18 //

18. Constantly remaining steadfast on his spiritual path and being vigilant in strictly observing the principles of Sanyas, he must always live in a clean place.

A Yogi (an ascetic) should always keep his eyes low and see only the ground ahead of him (instead of looking up at things or persons that might distract him) during his wanderings. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 65-66.] (18).

न रात्रौ न च मध्याह्ने संध्ययोर्नैव पर्यटन् । न शून्ये न च दुर्गे वा प्राणिबाधाकरे न च ॥१९॥

na rātrau na ca madhyāhne sandhyayornaiva paryāṭan /  
na śūnye na ca durge vā prāṇibādhākare na ca // 19 //

19. He should not move out here and there during the night, at noon time, at dawn and at dusk. He should also not venture into such places as are completely un-inhabited, or terrains that are harsh, rough and inhospitable, and which cause unpredictable and endless miseries for any creature that happens to inadvertently venture into them. [It should be noted here that the scriptures do not mean to inflict torture upon Yogis or Sanyasis when they prescribe stern rules of conduct for them, as is clear that they tell him not to go to such places that cause physical harm or unnecessary discomfort. Strict codes of conduct and moral discipline are necessary if one has to succeed in such arduous and difficult a path as Yoga and Sanyas. Any negligence would spoil the whole game and would be detrimental for one's own welfare.]

A Parivrajak can stay in a small village for one night, in a bigger village for two nights, in a small town for three nights, and in a large town or city for five nights. [Refer verse nos. 14 and 16 also. When we read verse no. 16 which advises him to stay outside a village we conclude that he is not to stay inside the populated areas but on the outskirts of such villages or cities, or in some temple located within their territorial limits. Staying in a temple or shrine is sanctioned by Canto 3, verse no. 90. The idea is that he should be generally on the move except under certain circumstances. Constant wondering is also endorsed in Canto 7, verse no. 1.] (19).

एकरात्रं वसेद्ग्रामे पत्तने तु दिनत्रयम् । पुरे दिनद्वयं भिक्षुर्नगरे पञ्चरात्रकम् । वर्षास्वेकत्र तिष्ठेत स्थाने पुण्यजलावृते ॥२०॥

ekarātram vasedgrāme pattane tu dinatrayam /  
pure dinadvayaṃ bhikṣurnagare pañcarātrakam /  
varṣāsvekatra tiṣṭheta sthāne puṇyajalāvṛte // 20 //

20. During the rainy season, he should find a place that is surrounded by clean water to stay. [That is, the place should have a clean source of water readily available, such as being near a large pond, a lake or a river.] (20).

आत्मवत्सर्वभूतानि पश्यन्भिक्षुश्चरेन्महीम् । अन्धवत्कुब्जवच्चैव बधिरोन्मत्तमूकवत् ॥२१॥

ātmavatsarvabhūtāni paśyanbhikṣuścarenmahīm /  
andhavatkuñjavaccaiva badhironmattamūkavat // 21 //

21. Treating all the living beings as being similar to his own 'self', having no sense of discrimination between any of them and his own self, he must wander freely like a blind man, a stupid man, a deaf man, a lunatic or mentally deranged man, or a dumb man. [That is, his demeanours should be innocent like a child. He should not see anything like a blind man, not get involved in intellectual exercises like a stupid man, not hear anything like a deaf man, not get mentally attached to anything like a deranged man, and not speak anything like a dumb man. These forms of avoiding any contact with the deluding and entrapping world helps him not only to maintain his calm, peace, neutrality and poise, but also helps him to control his mind and emotions, and to direct their efforts towards his long term spiritual welfare and help him to move ahead on his spiritual path unhindered and without any fetters attached.] (21).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse no. 62.]

स्नानं त्रिषवणं प्रोक्तं बहूदकवनस्थयोः । हंसे तु सकृदेव स्यात्परहंसे न विद्यते ॥२२॥

snānaṃ triṣavaṇaṃ proktaṃ bahūdakavanasthayoḥ /  
haṃse tu sakṛdeva syātparahamse na vidyate // 22 //

22. For Sanyasis who are called 'Bahudak' and for those who live in a forest it is prescribed that they take a bath three times a day.

For Sanyasis who are categorised as 'Hans' it is stipulated that they should take only one bath each day.

For those Sanyasis who have risen to a higher spiritual stature and are therefore honoured by the title of Param Hans (supremely realised, immaculate, holy and pure) there is no such recommendation. [They are no special rules for them as laid out for other categories of Sanyasis. The reason is that bath and other purification rites are meant for those who are yet not completely clean and holy internally in the true sense, or who are like the pilgrim who has yet not reached his destination. The word 'Param' itself shows that this sort of Sanyasi has reached the pinnacle or the citadel of

self-realisation and enlightenment. He has been washed clean of all the taints that mire other junior categories of Sanyasis, and so it makes no sense for him to clean the external body, because this body has no relevance at all. Therefore, for those who have already reached this exalted stature of being a Param Hans, such exercises of taking a purification bath become superfluous, and hence unnecessary. However, if they do wish to take a bath due to some reason, say an extreme hot environment, then they are not even prohibited from doing so. In fact, they are given a lot of freedom to decide what suits them. Refer verse no. 24 of this Canto 4 below.] (22).

मौनं योगसनं योगस्तितिक्षैकान्तशीलता । निःस्पृहत्वं समत्वं च सप्तैतान्येकदण्डिनाम् ॥२३॥

maunaṃ yogāsanam yogastitikṣaikaṅtaśīlatā /  
niḥspr̥hatvaṃ samatvaṃ ca saptaitānyaikadaṇḍinām // 23 //

23. For ‘Ek-Dandi’ Sanyasis (i.e. those ascetics who hold a straight staff made of one single piece of wood) the following rules are prescribed for observance—Maun (silence), Yogasan (the various sitting postures of Yoga), Yoga (meditation leading to the union of the self with the cosmic Self, along with unification of the various Prans or vital winds inside the body), Titiksha (to have forbearance, tolerance, fortitude), Ekanta (to live alone and in a secluded place; not to have company), Nispriya (to remain free from desire and wants; to be contented; to be dispassionate, indifferent and detached), and Samatva (to have equanimity; to treat everything and everyone equally; not to discriminate between any two entities based on any worldly criterion) (23).

परहंसाश्रमस्थो हि स्नानादेरविधानतः । अशेषचित्तवृत्तीनां त्यागं केवलमाचरेत् ॥२४॥

parahaṃsāśramastho hi snānāderavidhānataḥ /  
aśeṣacittavṛttinām tyāgaṃ kevalamācaret // 24 //

24. Since it is not required of a Sanyasis (a Parivrajak) who has reached the higher spiritual stature of being a Param Hans (a superior order of Sanyas) to take a regular purification bath (refer verse no. 22), it is sufficient for him to get rid of the various Vrittis (natural tendencies and inclinations) of his Chitta (sub-conscious mind). [That is, for a Param Hans Sanyasi, the riddance of the mind’s natural waywardness, inherent fickleness, and its natural tendency to be attracted towards the sense objects of this material world instead of remaining focussed on spiritual matters is equivalent to taking a purification bath. This is because while bathing in water would only clean the external body, if the mind is not freed from its corruptions and faults then the internal being would remain as polluted and defiled as before, and actual cleansing has not been achieved. Since a Sanyasi is not supposed to act to please the world, it is most important for him to clean his inner being more than the external body, as his ‘truthful self’ is his inner being and not the external body.] (24).

त्वङ्मांसरुधिरस्नायुमज्जामेदोस्थिसंहतौ । विण्मूत्रपूये रमतां क्रिमीणां कियदन्तरम् ॥२५॥

tvañmāṃsarudhirasnāyumajjāmedosthisamhatau /  
viñmūtrapūye ramatāṃ krimiñāṃ kiyadantaram // 25 //

25. Say, how much difference is there between a man who moves around in a body which is like a bag made of skin that encloses or contains flesh, blood, nerves and veins, fat, marrow and bones, and an insect or worm or germ that lives in filth such as excretory products consisting of stool and urine as well as stinking purulent discharges effusing from rotten mucous surfaces? [That is, there is no difference between the two of them.] (25).

क्व शरीरमशेषाणां श्लेष्मादीनां महाचयः । क्व चाङ्गशोभा सौभाग्यकमनीयादयो गुणाः ॥२६॥

kva śarīramaśeṣāṇāṃ śleṣmādīnāṃ mahācayaḥ /  
kva cāṅgaśobhāsaubhāgyakamanīyādayo guṇāḥ // 26 //

26. On the one hand is the actual form and truthful reality of this body as a big container of reprehensible things such as cough and mucous, and on the other hand is its misleading external façade which appears to have handsome qualities such as beautiful and attractive organs, chiselled features and exceptional charms (26).

मांसासृक्पूयविण्मूत्रस्नायुमज्जास्थिसंहतौ । देहे चेत्रीतिमान्मूढो भविता नरकेऽपि सः ॥२७॥

māṃsāsṛkṣpūyaviñmūtrasnāyumajjāsthisamhatau /  
dehe cetprītimānmūḍho bhavitā narake'pi saḥ // 27 //

27. If a man is stupid enough to have affections for and attractions towards such a reproachable and despicable body consisting of nothing else but blood, flesh, purulent mucous, stool, urine, marrow, nerves, veins and bones, then surely enough he goes to attain hell or a lowly and contemptible stature befitting his low mentality (27).

स्त्रीणामवाच्यदेशस्य क्लिन्ननाडीव्रणस्य च । अभेदेऽपि मनोभेदाज्जनः प्रायेण वञ्च्यते ॥२८॥

strīṇāmavācyadeśasya klinnanādīvraṇasya ca /  
abhede'pi manomedājjanaḥ prāyeṇa vañcyate // 28 //

28. Though there is no fundamental difference between the private organs (i.e. the genitals) of a woman and a rotten tubular duct inside the body such as a diseased and swollen vein or nerve, it is still out of a man's own imaginations based on ignorance and stupidity (as well as lust and passions and other such Vikaars or faults and shortcomings of the mind) that he thinks that there is a difference, and therefore he is inclined to long for one and feel repulsive for the other. [That is, to think of the female organ, which is like a hollow tube full of bodily fluids, as charming, and the festering, maggot-infested wound of some vein or artery in the body as horrible, is indeed a stupid and most ignorant way of treating the reality. For a wise man, they are both alike, and if he must abhor the thoughts of rotten vein than he must also instinctively feel repulsive when thinking of the female organ.] (28).

चर्मखण्डं द्विधा भिन्नमपानोद्गारधूपितम् । ये रमन्ति नमस्तेभ्यः साहसं किमतः परम् ॥२९॥

carmakhaṇḍaṃ dvidhā bhinnamapānodgāradhūpitam /  
ye ramanti namastebhyaḥ sāhasaṃ kimataḥ param // 29 //

29. After all, what is the female sex organ? It is nothing but a hole that is covered by a flap of skin that has been ruptured down the centre. What more, even this is stinking due to the whirling and the passage of the Apaan Vayu (the wind that moves in the lower part of the abdomen, and usually goes down the intestines and escapes through the anus).

We bow (in sarcasm) to a man who remains ever engrossed in it and its thoughts. What other great courage can he display! [To be enamoured by a hole that emits stink due to its proximity to the anus from where the foul Apaan wind passes, and through which the horrible stale odour of the urine emanates, is absolutely incredible and the most reprehensible thing for a man within his right senses to do. But still if he does it, then of course he deserves the greatest of ridicule, contempt and reproach.] (29).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 46-50 in the context of present verse nos. 25-29 which also endorse the view that the gross body of the creature is worthy of contempt.]

न तस्य विद्यते कार्यं न लिङ्गं वा विपश्चितः । निर्ममो निर्भयः शान्तो निर्द्वन्द्वोऽवर्णभोजनः ॥३०॥

na tasya vidyate kāryaṃ na liṅgaṃ vā vipaścitaḥ /  
nirmamo nirbhayaḥ śānto nirdvandvo'varṇabhojanaḥ // 30 //

30. For a truly wise and enlightened Parivrajak there is no duty left to be completed, deed left to be done or action that is yet to be taken with respect to anything, and neither is there any necessity for him or any obligation on his part to wear any external signs or symbols. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 80-82, 91.]

He is free from all affections and endearments. He is free from all fears and reservations. He is calm, peaceful and poised. He is free from all turmoil, restlessness and agitations. He is also free from the numerous restrictions and obligatory formalities to be observed by various classes and castes in the society. He is even free from the need of making diligent efforts to acquire food for himself (because he is supposed to accept whatever comes his way as a grace of the Lord without being worried about what it is, or from where his next meal would come) (30).

मुनिः कौपीनवासाः स्यान्नग्नो वा ध्यानतत्परः । एवं ज्ञानपरो योगी ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥३१॥

muniḥ kaupīnavāsāḥ syānnagno vā dhyānatatparaḥ /  
evaṃ jñānaparo yogī brahmabhūyāya kalpate // 31 //

31. A renunciate hermit (Muni) should wear only the loin-cloth, or else he should remain without clothes (i.e. naked) while he constantly remains engrossed in

contemplation and remembrance of the supreme Lord. Such a wise and enlightened ascetic (Yati) is successful in attaining the transcendental state of Brahm realisation (31).

लिङ्गे सत्यपि खल्वस्मिञ्ज्ञानमेव हि कारणम् । निर्मोक्षायैह भूतानां लिङ्गग्रामो निरर्थकः ॥३२॥

liṅge satyapi khalvasmiñjñānameva hi kāraṇam /  
nirmokṣāyeha bhūtānāṃ liṅgagrāmo nirarthakaḥ // 32 //

32. Though certain signs and symbols are prescribed for the use of Parivrajaks (Sanyasis), but primarily it is Gyan (truthful knowledge of the esoteric principles of the ‘supreme self’ and metaphysics) that is the provider of Moksha (final liberation and deliverance; emancipation and salvation) to them.

All the external signs and symbols of Sanyas and codes of conduct they follow are useless if one has not inculcated Gyan in its holistic and truthful form (32).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse no. 86.]

यन्न सन्तं न चासन्तं नाश्रुतं न बहुश्रुतम् । न सुवृत्तं न दुर्वृत्तं वेद कश्चित्स ब्राह्मणः ॥३३॥

yanna santam na cāsantam nāśrutam na bahuśrutam /  
na suvṛttam na durvṛttam veda kaścitsa brāhmaṇaḥ // 33 //

33. A true Brahman/Brahmin (i.e. a person who is Brahm-realised) is one about whom no one can determine his true nature, as to whether he is a holy and pious person or not, whether he is a wise, knowledgeable, enlightened and learned man or not, and whether he lives an auspicious and righteous life observing all the tenets of right living, right thoughts and right conduct or not. [That is, a truly realised man prefers to keep quiet and not boast of his spiritual achievements or his knowledge. He has no desire for praise that would automatically come should people come to know of this holiness and exalted stature. It makes no difference to him if people neglect him as one other vagabond going around to beg though he might be possessing exceptional mystical powers that would stun the world should he display them even once. He rather prefers anonymity because this gives him his much desire peace and need for solitude. For, otherwise, he would be surrounded by multitudes of eager blessing-seekers, and he would regret this development later on.] (33).

[Note—Refer Canto 4, verse no. 2.]

तस्मादलिङ्गो धर्मज्ञो ब्रह्मवृत्तमनुव्रतम् । गूढधर्माश्रितो विद्वानज्ञातचरितं चरेत् ॥३४॥

tasmādaliṅgo dharmajño brahmavṛttamanuvratam /  
gūḍhadharmāśrito vidvānajñānacaritaṃ caret // 34 //

34. This is why a wise and enlightened Parivrajak should not be too much concerned about the signs or symbols of Sanyas, but instead concentrate upon implementing the best of spiritual doctrines pertaining to the supreme Brahm who is eternal and

imperishable. It is this knowledge of Brahm that would be the ultimate tool that gives him Moksha as a Sanyasi. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 91-92.]

Relying on the most esoteric and holy principles of true Sanyas, he should remain incognito and behave in such a way that no one becomes aware of his real spiritual stature. [Refer verse no. 33.] (34).

संदिग्धः सर्वभूतानां वर्णाश्रमविवर्जितः । अन्धवज्जडवच्चापि मूकवच्च महीं चरेत् ॥३५॥

sandigdhaḥ sarvabhūtānaṃ varṇāśramavivarjitaḥ /  
andhavajjadavaccāpi mūkavacca mahīm caret // 35 //

35. Remaining an enigmatic mystery for all, he must remain above the various restrictions that are imposed upon a man depending upon the different class or caste or phase of life to which he belongs. [That is, he must not conform to any set rules in his behaviour so that people can determine who he might be or what his mental state is.]

Remaining without any permanent shelter, he should wander on the face of the earth like a man who is blind, stupid or dumb. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 62; Canto 4, verse no. 21; Canto 5, verse no. 50, 53 also.] (35).

तं दृष्ट्वा शान्तमनसं स्पृहयन्ति दिवौकसः । लिङ्गाभावात्तु कैवल्यमिति ब्रह्मानुशासनमिति ॥३६॥

taṃ dr̥ṣṭvā śāntamanasaṃ spr̥hayanti divaukasaḥ /  
liṅgābhāvattu kaivalyamiti brahmānuśāsanamiti // 36 //

36. Even the exalted Gods feel eager to attain the exemplary stature of extreme quietude, contentedness and bliss that is experienced by such an achieved Sanyasi when they watch him.

The eclectic spiritual state of Kaivalya (the only one; the unique state of transcendental bliss and quietude) is obtainable only when one is not aware of the existence of any other entity except his own Atma, the pure conscious self. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 27.]

Verily, this is the divine and holy message pertaining to the eclectic spiritual essence known as Brahm Tattva.' (36).

अथ नारदः पितामहं संन्यासविधिं नो ब्रूहीति पप्रच्छ । पितमामहस्तथेत्यङ्गीकृत्यातुरे वा क्रमे वापि तुरीयाश्रमस्वीकारार्थं कृच्छ्रप्रायश्चित्तपूर्वकमष्टश्राद्धं कुर्याद्वेवर्षिदिव्यमनुष्यभूत पितृमात्रात्मेत्यष्टश्राद्धानि कुर्यात् । प्रथमं सत्यवसुसंज्ञकान्विश्वान्देवान्देवश्राद्धे ब्रह्मविष्णुमहेश्वरानृषिश्राद्धे देवर्षिक्षत्रियर्षिमनुष्यर्षीन् दिव्यश्राद्धे वसुरुद्रादित्यरूपान्मनुष्यश्राद्धे सनकसनन्दनसनत्कुमारसनत्सुजातान्भूतश्राद्धे पृथव्यादिपञ्चमहाभूतानि चक्षुरादिकरणानि चतुर्विधभूतग्रामान्पितृश्राद्धे पितृपितामहप्रपितामहान्मातृश्राद्धे मातृपितामहीप्रपितामहीरात्मश्राद्धे आत्मपितृपितामहाञ्जीवत्पितृकश्चेत्पितरं त्यक्त्वा आत्मपितामहप्रपितामहानिति सर्वत्र युग्मकलृप्त्या ब्राह्मणानर्चयेदेकाध्वरपक्षेऽष्टाध्वरपक्षे वा स्वशाखानुगतमन्त्रैरष्टश्राद्धान्यष्टदिनेषु वा एकदिने वा पितृयागोक्तविधानेन ब्राह्मणानभ्यर्च्य भुक्त्यन्तं यथाविधि निर्वर्त्य पिण्डप्रदानानि निर्वर्त्य दक्षिणाताम्बूलैस्तोषयित्वा ब्राह्मणान्प्रेषयित्वा शेषकर्मसिद्धयर्थं



सप्तकेशान्विसृज्य 'शेषकर्मप्रसिद्धयर्थं केशान्सप्ताष्ट वा द्विजः । संक्षिप्य वापयेत्सपूर्वं केशश्मश्रुनखानि च' इति सप्तकेशान्संरक्ष्य कक्षोपस्थवर्जं क्षौरपूर्वकं स्नात्वा सायंसंध्यावन्दनं निर्वर्त्य सहस्रगायत्रीं जप्त्वा ब्रह्मयज्ञं निर्वर्त्य स्वाधीनाग्निमुपस्थाप्य स्वशाखोपसंहरणं कृत्वा तदुक्तप्रकारेणाज्याहुतिमाज्यभागानं हुत्वाहुतिविधिं समाप्यात्मादिभिस्त्रिवारं सक्तुप्राशनं कृत्वाचमनपूर्वकमग्निं संरक्ष्य स्वयमग्नेरुत्तरतः कृष्णाजिनोपरि स्थित्वा पुराणश्रवणपूर्वकं जागरणं कृत्वा चतुर्थयामान्ते स्नात्वा तदग्नौ चरुं श्रपयित्वा पुरुषसूक्तेनान्नस्य षोडशाहुतीर्हुत्वा विरजाहोमं कृत्वा अथाचम्य सदक्षिणं वस्त्रं सुवर्णपात्रं धेनुं दत्त्वा समाप्य ब्रह्मोद्वासनं कृत्वा । सं मा सिञ्चन्तु मरुतः समिन्द्रः सं बृहस्पतिः । सं मायमग्निः सिञ्चत्वायुषा च धनेन च बलेन चायुष्मन्तं करोतु मा इति । या ते अग्ने यज्ञिया तनूस्तयेह्यारोहात्मात्मानम् । अच्छा वसूनि कृण्वन्नस्मे नर्या पुरुणि । यज्ञो भूत्वा यज्ञमासीद स्वां योनिं जातवेदो भुव आजायमानः स क्षय एधीत्यनेनाग्निमात्मन्यारोप्य ध्यात्वाग्निं प्रदक्षिणनमस्कारपूर्वकमुद्रास्य प्रातःसंध्यामुपास्य सहस्रगायत्रीपूर्वकं सूर्योपस्थानं कृत्वा नाभिदण्डोदकमुपविश्याष्टदिक्पालकार्घ्यपूर्वकं गायत्र्युद्वासनं कृत्वा सावित्रीं व्याहृतिषु प्रवेशयित्वा । अहं वृक्षस्य रेखि । कीर्तिः पृष्ठं गिरेखि । ऊर्ध्वपवित्रो वाजिनीवस्वमृतमस्मि । द्रविणं मे सर्वर्चसं सुमेधा अमृतोक्षितः । इति त्रिशङ्कोर्वेदानुवचनम् । यश्छन्दसामृषभो विश्वरूपः । छन्दोभ्योऽध्यमृतात्संबभूव । स मे इन्द्रो मेधया स्पृणोतु । अमृतस्य देवधारणो भूयासम् । शरीरं मे विचर्षणम् । जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा । कर्णाभ्यां भूरि विश्रवम् । ब्रह्मणः कोशोऽसि मेधयापिहितः । श्रुतं मे गोपाय । दारेषणायाश्च वित्तेषणायाश्च लोकेषणायाश्च व्युत्थितोऽहं ॐ भूः संन्यस्तं मया ॐ भुवः संन्यस्तं मया ॐ सुवः संन्यस्तं मया ॐ भूभुवः सुवः संन्यस्तं मयेति मन्द्रमध्यमतालजध्वनिभिर्मनसा वाचोच्चार्याभयं सर्वभूतेत्यो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते स्वाहेत्यनेन जलं प्राश्य प्राच्यां दिशि पूर्णाञ्जलिं प्रक्षिप्यो स्वाहेति शिखामुत्पाट्य । यज्ञोपवीतं परमं पवित्रं प्रजापतेर्यत्सहजं पुरस्तात् । आयुष्यमग्र्यं प्रतिमुञ्च शुभ्रं यज्ञोपवीतं बलमस्तु तेजः । यज्ञोपवीतं बहिर्न निवसेस्त्वमन्तः प्रविश्य मध्ये ह्यजस्रं परमं पवित्रं यशो बलं ज्ञानवैराग्यं मेधा प्रयच्छेति यज्ञोपवीतं छित्त्वा उदकाञ्जलिना सह । ॐ भूः समुद्रं गच्छ स्वाहेत्यप्सु जुहुयात् । ॐ भूः संन्यस्तं मया । ॐ भुवः संन्यस्तं मया । ॐ सुवः संन्यस्तं मयेति त्रिरुक्त्वा त्रिवारमभिमन्त्र्य तज्जलं प्राश्याचम्य ॐ भूः स्वाहेत्यप्सु वस्त्रं कटिसूत्रमपि विसृज्य सर्वकर्मनिवर्तकोऽहमिति स्मृत्वा जातरूपधरो भूत्वा स्वरूपानुसंधानपूर्वकमूर्ध्वबाहुरुदीचीं गच्छेत् ॥३७॥

atha nāradaḥ pitāmahaṁ samnyāśavidhiṁ no brūhīti papraccha /  
 pitāmahastathetyaṅgikṛtyāture vā krame vāpi  
 turīyāśramasvīkārārārthaṁ kṛcchraprāyaścitta  
 pūrvakamaṣṭaśrāddhaṁ kuryāddevaṛṣidivyaṁmanuṣya  
 bhūtapitṛmātrātmetyaṣṭaśrāddhāni kuryāt /  
 prathamam satyavasusamjñakānviśvāndevāndevaśrāddhe  
 brahmaviṣṇumaheśvarānṛṣīśrāddhe devaṛṣikṣatriyaṛṣi  
 manuṣyaṛṣiṇ divyaśrāddhe vasurudrādutyarūpānmanuṣyaśrāddhe  
 sanakasanandanasanatkumārasanatsujātānbhūtaśrāddhe  
 mātṛpitāmahīprapitāmahīrātmaśrāddhe  
 ātmapitṛpitāmahāñjīvatpitṛkaścetpitaram tyaktvā  
 ātmapitāmahaprapitāmahāniti sarvatra yugmakṛptyā  
 brāhmaṇānarcayedekādhvarapakṣe'ṣṭādhvarapakṣe vā  
 svaśākhānugatamantrairaṣṭaśrāddhānyaṣṭadīneṣu vā  
 ekadine vā pitṛyāgoktavidhānena brāhmaṇānabhyarcya  
 muktyantaṁ yathāvidhi nirvartya piṇḍapradānāni nirvartya  
 dakṣiṇātāmḥbūlaistoṣayitvā brāhmaṇanpreṣayitvā

śeṣakarmasiddhyartham saptakeśānvisrjya  
 śeṣakarmaprasiddhyartham keśānsaptāṣṭa vā dvijaḥ /  
 samkṣīpya vāpayetpūrvam keśāśmaśrunakhāni ceti  
 saptakeśānsamrakṣya kakṣopasthavarjaḥ kṣaurapūrvakaḥ  
 snātvā sāyaṃsandhyāvandanam nirvartya sahasragāyatrīm  
 japtvā brahmayajñam nirvartya svādhīnāgnimupasthāpya  
 svaśākhopasaṃharaṇam kṛtvā taduktaprakāreṇājyāhuti  
 mājyabhāgāntam hutvāhutividhiṃ samāpyātmādibhistrivāram  
 saktuprāśanam kṛtvācamanapūrvakamagniṃ samrakṣya  
 svayamagneruttarataḥ kṛṣṇajīnopari sthitvā purāṇaśravaṇapūrvakaḥ  
 jāgaraṇam kṛtvā caturthayāmānte snātvā tadagnau caruṃ  
 śrapayitvā puruṣasūktenānnasya ṣoḍaśāhutirhutvā  
 virajāhomam kṛtvā athācamya sadakṣiṇam vastram suvarṇapātram  
 dhenum datvā samāpya brahmodvāsanam kṛtvā /  
 sam mā siñcantu marutaḥ samindraḥ sambrhaspatiḥ /  
 sammayamagniḥ siñcatvāyuṣā ca dhanena ca  
 balena cāyuṣmantaḥ karotu mā eti /  
 yā te agne yajñiṃ tanūstayehyārohātmātmānam /  
 acchā vasūni kṛṇvannasme naryā purūṇi /  
 yajño bhūtvā yajñamāsīda svām yoniṃ jātavedo bhuva  
 ājāyamānaḥ sa kṣaya edhītyanenāgnimātmānyāropya  
 dhyātvāgniṃ pradakṣiṇanamaskārapūrvakamudvāsya  
 prātaḥsandhyāmupāsya sahasragāyatrīpūrvakaḥ  
 sūryopasthānam kṛtvā nābhidaghnodakamupaviśya  
 aṣṭadīpālākārghyapūrvakaḥ gāyatrīyudvāsanam  
 kṛtvā sāvitṛm vyāhṛtiṣu praveśayitvā /  
 aham vrkṣasya reriva / kīrtiḥ pṛṣṭham gireriva /  
 ūrdhvapavitra vājīnīvasvamṛtamāsmi /  
 draviṇam me savarcasam sumedhā amṛtokṣitaḥ /  
 iti trīṣaṅkorvedānuvacanam /  
 yaśchandāsāmṛṣabho viśvarūpaḥ / chandobhyodhyamṛtātsambabhūva /  
 sa mendo medhayā sprṇotu / amṛtasya devadhāraṇo bhūyāsam /  
 śarīram me vicarṣaṇam / jihvā me madhumattamā /  
 karṇābhyām bhūri viśravam / brahmaṇaḥ kośo'si medhayāpihitaḥ /  
 śrutam me gopāya /  
 dāreṣaṇāyāśca vītṣeṣaṇāyāśca lokeṣaṇāyāśca vyutthito'ham om bhūḥ  
 samnyastam mayā om bhuvāḥ samnyastam mayā om suvāḥ samnyastam  
 mayā om bhūrbhuvāḥsuvāḥ samnyastam mayeti mandramadhyamatālaja  
 dhvanibhirmanasā vācoccāryābhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo  
 mattaḥ sarvaṃ pravartate svahetyanena jalam prāśya prācyām diśi  
 pūrṇāñjaliṃ prakṣipyomsvāheti śikhāmutpāṭhya /  
 yajñopavītam paramam pavitraṃ prajāpateryatsahajaṃ purastāt /  
 āyusyamagryam pratimuñcya śubhram yajñopavītam balamastu tejaḥ /  
 yajñopavīta bahirna nivasettvamantaḥ praviśya madhye hyajasram  
 paramam pavitraṃ yaśo balam jñānavairāgyam medhām prayaccheti  
 yajñopavītam chittvā udakāñjalīnā saha /  
 om bhūḥ samudram gaccha svāhetyapsu juhuyāt /  
 om bhūḥ samnyastam mayā om bhuvāḥ samnyastam mayā /

om suvaḥ saṁnyastaṁ mayeti triruktṛvā trivāramabhimantrya tajjalam  
 prāśyācamya om bhūḥ svāhetyapsu vastraṁ kaṭisūtramapi visrjya  
 sarvakarmanirvartako'hamiti smṛtvā jātarūpadharo bhūtvā  
 svarūpānusandhānapūrvakamūrdhvaḥurudīcīm gacchet // 37 //

37. [This verse is in the form of a running paragraph.]

Sage Narad once again asked the great grandfather of creation Brahma—‘Oh Lord! Please elaborate further on the steps involved and the proper system to be followed while accepting the vows of Sanyas.’ [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 80-92.]

Brahma said ‘Tathastu’ (so it shall be) and began his discourse.

‘When one wishes to accept the vows of strict renunciation (Sanyas) and enter the fourth and final phase of life as a Sanyasi—either directly as a ‘Aatur Sanyasi’ (i.e. one who eagerly accepts Sanyas as the result of profound renunciation, without waiting for old age) or after having systematically passed through the earlier three phases of life as a ‘Kram Sanyasi’ (i.e. one who takes to Sanyas after having lived earlier as a Brahmachari or celibate student, a Grishastha or household, and a Vanprastha or one who leaves the house and wanders around as a preparatory stage for final Sanyas)—he must first undertake certain purifying rites and do penances, such as doing Krichra and other such rituals followed by the ‘Astha Shraadh’ (as would be narrated now), that help one to atone for one’s past sins and cleanse one’s self. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 5-10, 77.]

The Astha Shraadh are the devotional worship and offerings that one makes by the way of oblations and libations to the following eight entities—Gods, Rishis (sages), Dibya Maanav (Holy Men; or those who have attained super-human stature), Bhuts (the five primary elements), Pitras (spirits of dead ancestors), the Matrikaas (divine Goddesses) and one’s own Atma (the pure conscious soul; one’s true ‘self’). It is most important to satisfy these eight before one takes the vows of Sanyas.

[Now, the details of these eight Shraadhs are being narrated.] To start with, for doing Dev Shraadh (offerings meant for the Gods) one should first invoke the Vishwa Devas (the Lords of the world) named Satya and Vasu, followed by the Trinity Gods, i.e. Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and protector, and Shiva the concluder.

For doing Rishi Shraadh, one should invoke all the great sages and seers—viz. the Dev-Rishis (celestial sages), the Raj-Rishis (those sages who have acquired the stature equivalent to a king amongst their peers), and Manushya-Rishis (sages who live like ordinary humans but are more exalted and enlightened than the latter).

For the purpose of Dibya Shraadh (or offerings made for exalted and divine entities), one should invoke the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudra (the eleven forms of Shiva) and the twelve Adityas (Suns)<sup>1</sup>.

For the purpose of doing Dibya Maanav Shraadh (i.e. offering worship and oblations to holy men), one should invoke the great men such as Sanak, Sanandan, Sanatkumar, and Sanatsujaat.

For doing Bhut Shraadh (or offerings made to the elements), one should invoke the five primary elements such as the earth, the sky etc. (the other elements being water, fire and air), and their manifestations in the form of the five organs of the body such as the eye etc. (the other being ear, nose, tongue and skin) and the four types of creatures called Jarayuj (those born from an embryo developing inside a mother’s womb such as humans), Swadej (those born from sweat such as lice), Andaj (those born from eggs such as birds and insects) and Udbhij (those born from seeds such as plants).

For doing Pitra Shraadh (or libations made for the spirit of dead ancestors, especially those of the male ancestors), one should invoke the spirits of one's father, grandfather and great grandfather.

For the purpose of doing Maatri Shraadh (libations made for the spirit of one's mother etc.), one should invoke the spirit of one's mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

Finally, for doing Atma Shraadh, one should invoke one's own Atma as an entity that is pure consciousness and the true 'self' of the worshipper, as well as the Atma (soul; Spirit) of one's father and one's grandfather. [The worshipper must understand that the Atma is a universal and indistinguishable entity—it is the same in his own self as it was in his ancestors. This is the non-dual philosophy of Advaitya Vedanta, and a true Sanyasi is one who believes in this tenet of non-duality.]

These eight Shraadhs are to be treated as part of one obligatory sacrifice ritual for the purpose of accepting the vows of Sanyas. Since each Shraadh if done separately, would require the aspirant to invite two Brahmins to preside over the rituals, it follows that a total of sixteen Brahmins should be invited when they are done together. These Brahmins should be duly honoured and worshipped. The Mantras employed for this purpose should be according to the branch of the Vedas to which these Brahmins owe their allegiance.

These Shraadhs can be done in one day if they are done together (as mentioned above), or spread over eight days if done separately.

The invited Brahmins should be duly honoured, worshipped and fed as described in the rules prescribed for doing Shraadh. At the end of the rituals, the rite of Pinda Daan (offering of rounded balls of cooked cereals to the deity invoked during the ritual) is to be done with great respect. Then donation or Dakshina should be given to the Brahmins along with some mouth fresheners such as betel leaves.

To tonsure the head, the aspirant should leave seven or eight strands of hair on the top of the head and get the rest shaved. The beard, moustache and nails should also be shaved off. The hair in the arm-pit and around the testicles should never be shaved. After this shaving off of bodily hair, the aspirant must take a bath.

Then, he should repeat the Gayatri Mantra one thousand times at dusk after worshipping Brahm during the prayers offered while observing the Sandhya sacrament. [A Hindu is expected to worship three times of the day when two phases of time meet, such as dawn, noon and dusk. This is called doing Sandhya.]

Next, the aspirant should establish the sacred fire independently to do the special fire sacrifice dedicated to Brahm, called the 'Brahm Yagya'. [Normally when a fire sacrifice is done, the fire in the sacrificial pit is lit from a spark brought from some earlier sacrifice done in a householder's place. But an aspirant Sanyasi should light his own fire independently.]

The Yagya (fire sacrifice) should be done properly by offering melted butter till the offerings of Aajyabhaag is complete according to the way prescribed for the branch of the Vedas one ascribes to. [The 'Aajyabhaag' is the name given to the two libations of Aajya or melted butter that is offered to the Soma (the Moon God) and Agni (the Fire God) preceding the principal oblation to the Darsha sacrifice. The Darsha Yagya is the fire sacrifice that is done on the Amavasya day, the last day of the dark fortnight of the lunar month.]

After completing the fire sacrifice, the worshipper should take a few mouthfuls of Sattu (roasted gram that has been ground to a coarse powder and kneaded into dough with water). Thereafter, he should sip some water to clean the mouth and place some firewood on the fire to save it from extinguishing. Then he

should sit on a dark deer skin to the north of the fire pit and spend the night remaining awake and hearing ancient stories as narrated in the Purans etc.

In the fourth quarter of the night (i.e. early morning before sun rise), he should take a bath and cook some sweet porridge in the fire of the previous night. Then he should offer sixteen oblations of this porridge to the sacred fire of the previous night (and in which this porridge was cooked) using the sixteen Mantras of the Purush Sukta (a hymn of the Vedas dedicated to the Viraat Purush, the all-pervading cosmic Supreme Being), saying one Mantra with one offering.

After having worshipped the Supreme Being with this sacrifice he should clean his mouth by sipping some water and make charities by giving away clothes, ornaments, gold, cows, vessels and other material objects that he has in his possession. [That is, he should not keep anything with him when he takes the vows of Sanyas.] This would complete all the prescribed rites and rituals necessary for systematically accepting the order of Sanyas.

Then after having dismissed the Brahmins representing Brahma, he must say the following two Mantras and symbolically establish the Adhi-daivak form (i.e. the divine celestial form) of the sacred fire inside his own being for the future. [That is, now onwards he need not worship the fire formally in any external ritual involving elaborate Mantras and other formalities, but worship it internally in his own 'self'.]

The two Mantras for this purpose are—

(i) 'Sam Ma Sinchantu Marut Samindra Sam Brishaspati; Sam Mayamagni Sinchatwayush Cha Dhanen Cha Balen Chanushmantam Karotu Ma'. (saṃ mā siñcantu marutaḥ samindraḥ saṃbr̥haspatiḥ / saṃmāyamagniḥ siñcatvāyūṣa ca dhanena ca balena cāyūṣantaḥ karotu mā)

[The brief meaning of this Mantra is 'Oh the divine Gods such as Maruts (the Wind Gods), Indra (the king of Gods), Brihaspati (the moral preceptor of Gods) and Agni (the Fire God)—shower me or bless me with welfare and auspiciousness. Oh Fire God! Bless me with a long life (i.e. a disease-free life), with assets in the form of Gyan (knowledge), and with all necessary abilities and resources (that would help me achieve success in my new life as a Sanyasi).']

(ii) The second Mantra is 'Ya Te Agne Yagyiya Tanustyeyhaya-rohatmatmanam; Acha Vasuni Krinvannasme Naryaa Puruni; Yagyo Bhutva Yagyamaasid Swaam Yonim Jatvedo Bhuva Aajaayamaanha Sa Kshaya Ehi'. (yā te agne yajñīyā tanūstayehyārohātmātmānam / acchā vasūni kṛṇvannasme naryā purūṇi / yajño bhūtvā yajñamāsīda svāṃ yoniṃ jātavedo bhuva ājāyamānaḥ sa kṣaya edhī)

[The brief meaning of this Mantra is 'Oh Agni (Fire God)! Please reveal yourself here in the holy form that you assume during the sacred fire sacrifices, and while blessing us with all the material things that are needed by all human beings for their welfare and normal comfort in this material world, you must also especially establish yourself perpetually in my inner self called the Atma (my soul). Becoming the sacred fire of the fire sacrifice, establish yourself in your primary holy form. Oh Jatveda Fire—reveal yourself from the earth and get established in my body like it were your abode.' This is because the body has the earth element as its dominant ingredient.]

After having completed the fire sacrifice as described above, the aspirant should circumambulate the consecrated fire, bow before it reverentially, and give it rest.

Then he should do the Sandhya prayers that are done at dusk and dawn by repeating the holy Gayatri Mantra<sup>2</sup> one thousand times.

Getting up, he should proceed in the direction of the sun (i.e. towards the west at dusk, and towards the east at dawn) and enter any water body (such as a river or a lake). He should sit down in the water in such a way that the water reaches his navel region, and then offer libations to the eight Dikpals<sup>3</sup>. [The Gayatri Mantra is principally offered to the Sun God. So, after offering the prayers by facing the Sun God who is in the east at dawn and in the west at sunset, the worshipper moves in the respective direction for the next step to be undertaken now.]

The divine Goddess Savitri (representing the dynamic powers of the Supreme Being and made vivid by the dazzling rays of the Sun God in a symbolic manner) is invoked and requested to establish her divine presence in the Vyahritis<sup>4</sup>. The Mantras to be used for this purpose are the following four—

(i) ‘Aham Vrikchaya Reriv; Kirti Prishtham Giereriv; Urdhvapavitro Vajinivaswamritmasmi; Dravinam Me Sarwachasam Sumedha Amritokchitaha; Iti Trishankorvedanuvachanam.’ (aḥaṃ vṛkṣasya reriva / kīrtiḥ prṣṭhaṃ gireriva / ūrdhvapavitro vājīnīvasvamṛtamasmi / draviṇaṃ me savarcasaṃ sumedhā amṛtokṣitaḥ / iti trīśaṅkorvedānuvacanam /)

[The meaning of this Mantra in brief is ‘I am the conqueror of the world that is like a huge tree. My fame is as high as the lofty summit of a mountain. Like the Amrit or nectar that produces food and stored in the sun, I too am a treasury of the most holy and divine nectar of purity. I am glorious and full of understanding and intelligence. I am anointed by the nectar called Amrit. Verily, this is the enlightened words of the great Trishanku.’]

(ii) ‘Yaschandasāmrishabho Vishwarupha; Chandobhyo-adhyamritaatsambavhuv; Sa Me Indro Medhaya Sprinotu; Amritasya Devdharanao Bhuyasam.’ (yaśchandasāmrīṣabho viśvarūpaḥ / chandobhyodhyamṛtātsambabhūva / sa mendo medhayā sprṇotu / amṛtasya devadhāraṇo bhūyāsam /)

[The meaning of this Mantra in brief is ‘He who is lauded by the Vedas and who is manifested in all the forms in existence; he who is specially revealed by the Vedas—let that Indra (the chief amongst the Gods) bless me with intelligence and understanding. Oh Lord (Indra)! Let me be the one who is competent enough as well as the fortunate one who can establish the Supreme Being known as the Parmatma (the supreme Atma or the supreme Consciousness representing the supreme Brahman), who is an embodiment of Amrit (the nectar that gives eternity, bliss and beatitude), in my own self.’ That is, let me be blessed and enlightened enough to accept the august presence of the cosmic Consciousness representing the Parmatma in the form of my own Atma that resides in my inner being as my truthful conscious ‘self’.]

(iii) ‘Sharirum Me Vicharshanam; Jivhaha Me Madhumattama; Karnavhyam Bhuri Visravam; Brahmanha Koshoasi Medhayapihitha; Srutam Me Gopaya.’ (śarīraṃ me vicarṣaṇam / jihvā me madhumattamā / karṇābhyāṃ bhūri viśravam / brahmaṇaḥ kośo’si medhayāpihitaḥ / śrutam me gopāya /)

[The meaning of this Mantra in brief is ‘Let my body be agile, nimble and active. Let my tongue be sweet and pleasant in what it says (i.e. let my speech be nice and sweet; let me be able to talk pleasantly and truthfully). Let my ears hear only the best of words that are spoken (i.e. prevent me from having to hear idle talk, deceitful

words or any other kind of falsehoods). You (Savitri) are endowed by the glorious and grand virtues that are like those possessed by Brahma, the creator. Let me not forget the great words that I hear (i.e. give me a good memory).’]

(iv) ‘Dareshanyascha Vitteshanyascha Lokeshanayascha Vyuthitho-aham OM Bhu Sanyastam Mayaa. Om Bhuvha Sanyastam Mayaa. Om Suvaha Sanyastam Mayaa. OM Bhurbhuva Suvaha Sanyastam Mayeti Mandra-madhya-mataal-jadhya-nibhirmanasaa’ (dāreṣaṇāyāśca vitteṣaṇāyāśca lokeṣaṇāyāśca vyutthitho’ham om bhūḥ saṁnyastam mayā om bhuvah saṁnyastam mayā om suvah saṁnyastam mayā om bhūrbhuvahsuvah saṁnyastam mayeti mandramadhyamatālajadhvanibhirmanasā)

[The meaning of this Mantra in brief is ‘I have risen above (i.e. have abandoned) such worldly desires as those related to one’s wife, material prosperity and well-being, as well as all other forms of worldly entanglements such as the desire for worldly glory, grandeur, fame and majesty. I have completely renounced the material world. Indeed, I have fully and completely renounced all glories and majesties that are associated with any of the three worlds such as Bhu (earth), Bhuvaha (the lower heaven) and Swaha (the upper heaven). I don’t long for anything; I do not yearn for anything whatsoever. I have no fears of any kind in my mind ’]

These Mantras are to be said either mentally (i.e. silently), or uttered/muttered with a low voice in a whisper, or can even be said loudly so that others can hear them being said. (manasā vācoccāryābhayaṁ).

Then the aspirant should say the Mantra ‘Abhayam Sarvabhutebhyo Mattha Sarvam Pravartate Swaha’ and sip some water to clean the mouth. (abhayaṁ sarvabhūtebhyo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate svahe).

[The brief meaning of this Mantra is ‘All the creatures are hereby given fearlessness as far as I am concerned; they no longer have anything to fear from me. All are dear to me. All treat me kindly (and I also reciprocate their gesture by being loving, kind and gracious towards all).’]

The two palms of the hand should be made into a cup and filled with water. This water is thrown in the eastern direction with the Mantra ‘OM Swaha’. After that, all the remaining hairs on the head are to be shaved off.

Now, the Yogyopavit (sacred thread) is to be dispensed with. This is done by saying the Mantra ‘Yagyopavitam Param Pavitram Prajapateriyatsajam Purastaata; Ayushmagryam Pratimuncha Shubhram Yagyopavitam Balamastu Tejaha; Yogyopavit Bahirna Nivasettwamantaha Pravischya Madhye Hyajastam Paramam Pavitram Yasho Balam Gyan-vairagyam Medham Prayacheti.’ (yajñopavītaṁ paramaṁ pavitraṁ prajāpateryatsahajaṁ purastāt / āyushmagryaṁ pratimuñcya śubhram yajñopavītaṁ balamastu tejaḥ / yajñopavīta bahirna nivasettvamantaḥ praviśya madhye hyajasraṁ paramaṁ pavitraṁ yaśo balaṁ jñānavairāgyaṁ medhāṁ prayacchati)

[The brief meaning of this Mantra is ‘The Yagyopavit (thread worn by a Hindu across his chest) is sanctified, very holy and pure. It came into existence simultaneously with the creator Brahma. It is the best thing to wear, and is an enhancer of age (i.e. it helps to keep the ill effects of malignant stars that cause diseases and other problems for the body that make the body weak and fragile prematurely at bay so that the age is prolonged). The Yagyopavit should not be kept aside (i.e. it should not be removed from the body and kept elsewhere). Oh the sacred

thread that represents the fire sacrifice! Now onwards, please establish your divine presence in a symbolic manner in my Atma and become one with it. (That is, from today onwards, I would assume that you have established your august presence in my Atma in a subtle and symbolic form as I am not going to wear your external gross form on my equally gross body any longer). You are most pure and holy. Bless me with the inner strength that would enable me to wear you or accept you as a symbol of the eternal fire element that represents the sacred fire of the sacrifice, and is the eternal purifier of the soul, in my inner self as the vital spark of life that resides in my gross body. This would enable me with the necessary energy, strength, vitality and stamina that would help me to move ahead on my spiritual path without losing vigour and drive.’]

When the above Mantra is complete, the sacred thread is to be torn (cut or removed) from the body and placed in the cupped palms of the hand which has been dipped in water so that it is already full of it. Then this water, along with the torn sacred thread, is to be reverentially offered to the water body (i.e. the river on the banks of which the ritual is being performed) by saying the Mantra ‘OM Bhu Samudram Gacha Swaha’. (om bhūḥ samudraṃ gaccha svāhe)

[The Mantra means ‘OM salutations! I offer this sacred thread to the earth. Let it be taken to the ocean or the sea in due course of time.’ The sacred thread is actually offered to the river, and when the water of this river would eventually reach the ocean, the thread would find its final resting place there. Since it is not practically feasible for the Sanyasi to go to the ocean or the sea personally to offer the thread there, this medium is adopted by him.]

Then the aspirant should say the following three Mantras, and sip some sanctified water each time the Mantra is said—

- (i) ‘OM Bhu Sanyastam Mayaa’ (om bhūḥ saṃnyastaṃ mayā);
- (ii) ‘OM Bhuvaha Sanyastam Mayaa’ (om bhuvāḥ saṃnyastaṃ mayā); and
- (iii) ‘OM Swaha Sanyastam Mayaa’ (om suvaḥ saṃnyastaṃ mayeti).

[The meaning is simple. It means ‘OM salutations! I renounce everything on the earth’; ‘everything in the lower heavens’; and ‘everything in the upper heavens’ respectively.]

Thereafter, the aspirant should say the Mantra ‘OM Bhu Swaha’ (om bhūḥ svāhetyapsu) and offer the clothes that he has been wearing, along with the waist band, to the water body (vastraṃ kaṣīṣūtramapi visrjya). [The Mantra means ‘OM salutations! I am offering them to the earth’.]

Thus, having discarded all his possessions and becoming naked, he must think that he has renounced all his worldly obligations and has disassociated himself from all the worldly deeds (sarvakarmanirvartako’hamiti).

Contemplating upon his Atma (his pure conscious ‘self’) as being his true identity (smṛtvā jātārūpadharo bhūtvā svarūpānusandhānapūrvaka), he should raise both his hands sky wards (to indicate that he has nothing to conceal now, that he has no possessions now, that he is finally bidding farewell to this world, that he has surrendered himself to the Supreme Being, and to tell the Lord ‘here I come!’) and head in the northern direction (mūrdhvaḥbāhurudīcīṃ gacchet)<sup>5</sup> (37).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The eight Vasus—The Brihajjabal Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, Brahman 4, verse no. 16 lists the eight Vasus as follows—Ghar, Dhruv, Soma, Kripa, Anil, Anal, Pratyush and Prabhaash.



The eleven Rudras—(i) Mannu, (ii) Manu, (iii) Mahinas, (iv) Mahaan, (v) Shiva, (vi) Ritdwaj, (vii) Ugrareta, (viii) Bhav, (ix) Kaal, (x) Vamdeo, and (xi) Dhritvrat. The eleven Rudras appear in Rig Veda 1/43/1, and Taittiriya Brahman 3/4/9/7. They are regarded as the father of the Wind God or the Maruts (Rig Veda, 2/33/1). The word Rudra means one who is angry, terrible and wrathful. Amongst the Rudras, Lord Shiva is regarded as the most senior and enlightened.

The eleven Rudras according to Vishnu Puran (1/1/15) are the following— Har, Bahuroop, Trayambak, Aparajeet, Shambhu, Vrishakapi, Kapardi, Raivat, Mrigvyadh, Sharva, and Kapaali.

The twelve Adityas— According to mythology, there are said to be *twelve Adityas* which are simply as many forms of the Sun God. These are the revelations of Brahm in the form of the Sun to carry out the following functions of creation—(a) take care of the world (Rig Veda, 2/27/4); (b) are like the heads (Taittiriya Brahman, 1/2/3/3) and eyes (Jaimini, Uttar. 2/1/2/3) of all the creatures.

These twelve Adityas appear first in the Rig Veda 1/41/4-6 and 2/27. They are the sons of Aditi, the mother of Gods (Atharva Veda, 8/9/21). They are the following—the eight Vasus + Indra + Sun + Vishnu + Shiva = twelve in number.

According to Vishnu Puran, the twelve Adityas are the following— Dhata, Arayma, Mitra, Varun, Anshu, Bhug, Indra, Vivaswan, Pusha, Parjanya, Twashta, and Vishnu.

<sup>2</sup>The Gayatri Mantra is ‘OM BHURBHUVAHA SVAHA<sup>1</sup>, TSAVIURVARENYAM<sup>2</sup>, BHARGO DEVASYA DHIMAH<sup>3</sup>, DHIYO YO NAH PRACODAYAT<sup>4</sup>’. It means ‘OM is the supreme, transcendental Brahm. He is the lord of creation of the terrestrial, the celestial and heavenly worlds. I offer my oblations to you. That Brahm is luminous like the sun. He is excellent, the best, the most exalted, a destroyer of sins, and a divine entity. May he imbibe, infuse and inspire our intellect with wisdom and enlightenment so that we are purified and move on the righteous and noble path’. The four phrases of the Gayatri Mantra are clearly marked by small numerals in this Mantra. This Mantra appears in the Rig Veda (3/62/10), the Sam Veda (1462), and Yajur Veda (3/35, 22/9, 30/2, 36/6).

<sup>3</sup>The eight Dikpals—are the custodians or protectors of the eight directions. Indra (the king of Gods) takes care of the east, Yama (the God of death) takes care of the south, Varun (Water God) takes care of the west, Kuber (the Gods’ treasurer) takes care of the north, Agni (the Fire God) takes care of the south-east, Surya (the Sun God) takes care of the south-west, Vayu (the Wind God) takes care of the north-west, and Ishan (Shiva) takes care of the north-east.

<sup>4</sup>The *Vyahritis* are the primary root words pronounced by the creator Brahma at the time of the beginning of creation and from which formed the nucleus around which the seven worlds formed. In other words, the rest of the creation was revealed from these primary sounds created by Brahma.

The seven ‘Vyahritis’ are the words—(1) Bhu, (2) Bhuvaha, (3) Swaha, (4) Maha, (5) Janaha, (6) Tapaha, and (7) Satyam. ‘Bhu’ was the nucleus for earth, ‘Bhuvaha’ for the sky above the earth, ‘Swaha’ for the space beyond the earth’s atmosphere and is generally meant for the heavens, ‘Maha’ stands for the greater heavens beyond the solar system, called the Maha-Loka where enlightened sages and seers are supposed to dwell (as opposed to earth where ordinary creatures including subterranean creatures would finally take up residence), ‘Tapaha’ was the place where exalted ascetics would do penances and austerities, and ‘Satyam’ was the truthful and ultimate abode where the ultimate and irrefutable supreme truthful entity which is the only Authority in creation resides.

According to Sankhya Shastra and the Purans, Brahma, who is known as ‘Swayambhu’ (self-created and self-begotten in the sense that he had no father or ancestor from whom he descended) created seven elements called ‘Vyahriti’, viz. Bhu, Bhuvaha, Swaha, Mahaha, Janaha, Tapaha and Satyam respectively which constitute the fundamental elements which formed the gross body of the creation as

its core building blocks at the macro level. Encircling this core is the rounded globe called 'earth' which is surrounded by concentric circles constituting of 'water', 'energy' called 'Tej', 'wind or air', 'sky or space', the notions that are described as 'pride, ego, arrogance, haughtiness and vanity' collectively called 'Ahankar', and the notions of 'importance, majesty, grandeur, magnificence and lordliness' called collectively as 'Mahattatva'. Each of them was ten times larger than its preceding layer or circle.

The seven Vyahritis and the worlds they represent are the following—(a) 'Bhu' represents this world (earth), fire, Rig Veda and Pran (life giving breath); (b) 'Bhuvaha' represents the sky called Antariksha, wind or air, Sam Vedas and Apaana wind (i.e. the wind which passes down the intestines and helps in digestion and excretion); (c) 'Swaha' represents Dukoka (the heavens), Aditya (the celestial sun), Yajur Veda and Vyan (the wind that prevails throughout the body); (d) 'Maha' represents Aditya (the Sun God), Chandrama (the Moon God), Brahm (the supreme transcendental Being who has no specific attributes) and Anna (food which sustains life in this creation); (e) 'Janaha' represents the world inhabited by mortal creatures such as the life on earth; (f) 'Tapaha' represents the world where great ascetics and hermits live to do severe penances and austerities, and therefore it is most auspicious and holy and marked by an effulgence of divine energy and splendour; and (g) 'Satyam' representing that truthful abode where the supreme transcendental Brahm lives; it is the ultimate destination of all spiritual pursuits, and is marked by eternal beatitude and felicity.

<sup>5</sup>In the context of the Indian sub-continent where the Upanishads were first conceived and composed, going in the 'northern' direction refers to heading for the lofty heights of the Himalayan mountain range. It is here that great ascetics, sages, seers, hermits and mendicants used to live in early times. It has a dense population of enlightened and self-realised souls. This factor injected an aura of divinity and positivity to the northern direction. Further, the northern direction where the mountains and verdant pristine forests were located had the quality of being tranquil, lonely, serene, calm and peaceful that was very helpful for spiritual pursuits, such as doing Tapa (austerity and penance), Dhyana (contemplation) and Yoga (meditation). This is the reason why the green, cool and pleasant surroundings of the mountains and their forests were chosen by ancient sages and ascetics as their preferred habitat. This place was far away from the hustle and bustle and the restlessness of ordinary mundane life of the world, and was untouched by corruptions and worldly taints. It gave these holy people absolute peace and quietude that is so necessary for spiritual pursuit, mental peace and emotional solace.

The term 'northern' therefore symbolically represented the upward mobility of the soul when it sought to rise above the humdrum of worldly life, break free from all worldly shackles and entanglements, and seek its liberation and deliverance from the gross body as well as the gross world. It represented the quest for higher spiritual way of existence, a life of higher consciousness, awakening, realisation, wisdom, enlightenment etc. It represented a state of existence free from all moral and spiritual encumbrances represented by numerous taints, faults, corruptions and blemishes that are associated with life in this world. It would be a utopian and pristine pure form of enlightened existence much like the crystal clean and pristine environment of the mountains and its forests themselves.

The dimension, the intensity and the density of positive energy emanating from the pure consciousness is more in the northern direction as compared to other directions because of a greater population of self-realised and enlightened sages who lived in this particular region of the earth. The lofty peaks of the mountains are metaphors of high peaks of pure consciousness, or high intensity waves of consciousness that have peaked, and its accompanying high level of spiritual energy and positivity, while the valleys, depressions and gorges present elsewhere on earth

symbolise just the opposite—low level of consciousness and its accompanying low level of spiritual energy.

The world below the northern direction, i.e. everywhere else other than the northern direction, is literally like a slum-ghetto in spiritual metaphor—it is riddled with all sorts of factors that tie down the creature to this deluding world and its entanglements; it keeps the soul trapped in shackles; it impedes growth and development; it breeds moral and spiritual corruption and degeneration. Indeed, it is so gross that it needs quite an effort on the part of the aspirant to break free from its fetters and rise above to his final freedom.

We can look at these two directions from another angle. As compared to the northern direction where the high mountains are located, the opposite direction of the south is where the ‘ocean’ (the great Indian Ocean) is present. Whereas the mountain represents ‘high’ ground to which a man rushes for his life out of fear of being drowned during floods and deluges, the ocean is the one that does the opposite—it submerges and drowns everything; everything sinks in its fathomless waters. This is a metaphoric way of saying that the northern direction provides the high moral ground for the creature, and moving towards this direction means spiritual progress whereby the soul is lifted from the bowls of low forms of gross life, and endeavours to reach for the higher form of existence symbolised by the lofty peaks of the mountains. On the other hand, the southern direction is a metaphor for a lowly and gross form of existence that virtually drowns the creature in the quagmire of worldly delusions and its attendant problems just like the ocean sinks everything put in it.

The southern direction is a metaphor for spiritual downfall, degradation, degeneration and depletion of spiritual energy. The low-bound soul gets stuck in this marsh, gets dirty and corrupted, and thereby loses the pristine cleanliness and shine that it inherently possesses. The southern direction representing the gross and deluding world is entrapping for the soul, it’s an impediment for the soul’s liberation and deliverance, while the northern direction where high land and mountains are present represent the state of existence when the soul lives in a high moral ground, free from all taints and blemishes, and is equivalent to the soul’s progress towards its ultimate aim of finding liberation and emancipation.

This being so, those enlightened souls who lived in the northern direction were deemed to be like ‘radiant Gods’ because of the high level of energy of the consciousness emanating from them and forming a bright halo around them. As compared to these enlightened souls, those who lived down in the pit of ignorance and delusions that was characteristic of this material world lacked this glow of divine energy, and hence were regarded as ‘dark-complexioned’.

The other two directions, such as the east and the west, are dominated by plains and comparatively flat land in nature as compared to the mountains in the north and the ocean in the south. So they were represented by those who were ordinary humans, neither as brilliant as the ones who lived in the northern direction, nor as dark as the ones who lived in the southern direction.]

पूर्ववद्विद्वत्संन्यासी चेद्गुरोः सकाशात्प्रणवमहावाक्योपदेशं प्राप्य यथासुखं विहरन्मत्तः कश्चिन्नान्यो व्यतिरिक्त इति फलपत्रोदकाहारः पर्वतवनदेवतालयेषु संचरेत्संन्यस्याथ दिगम्बरः सकलसञ्चारकः सर्वदानन्दस्वानुभवैकपूर्णहृदयः कर्मातिदूरलाभः प्राणायामपरायणः फलरसत्वक्पत्रमूलोदकैर्मोक्षार्थी गिरिकन्दरेषु विसृजेदेहं स्मरंस्तारकम् ॥३८॥

pūrvavadvidvatsaṁnyāsī cedguroḥ  
sakaśātpṛaṇavamahāvākyaopadeśaṁ prāpya yathāsukhaṁ viharanmattaḥ  
kaścinnānyo vyatirikta iti phalapatrodakāhāraḥ parvatavanadevālayeṣu  
saṁcaretsaṁnyasyātha digambaraḥ sakalasaṁcārakaḥ

sarvadānandasvānubhavaikapūrṇahr̥dayaḥ karmātidūralābhaḥ  
prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇaḥ phalarasatvakpatramūlodakairmokṣārthi  
girikandareṣu visrjeddehaṁ smaraṁstārakam // 38 //

38. If the aspirant for Sanyas is already enlightened and learned then it is deemed that he must have accepted the Mantra OM and the Mahavakyas (the great sayings) of the Vedas from his learned Guru (moral preceptor) before he has taken the vows of Sanyas. As a result, it is expected of him that he becomes firmly established in the truth that there is an eternal and unambiguous uniformity in this creation so much so that there is nothing which is separate from his own 'self' (i.e. that everything in this existence is one or the other form of one universal Consciousness), and with this conviction firmly engrained in his mind he should roam gladly and carefree in this world.

For food he must rely on leaves, flowers, fruits and water. While wandering, he can take shelter in mountains, forests or shrines.

If he has discarded all clothes after taking the vows of Sanyas and prefers to remain a Digambar (naked), then it is expected of him that he would be overwhelmed by the eclectic realisation and constant experience of the presence of the ever-blissful Atma, which is his pure conscious 'self', inside his own lotus-like heart, that he would believe in the tenet that it is best for him to keep a safe distance from all involvement in deeds, that he would be regularly practicing Pranayam (breath control through certain Yoga exercises to preserve and strengthen his vital life forces), keep alive (active) his vital life forces by surviving on juices and skins of fruits and flowers, as well as on leaves, roots, tubers and water, and that the only desire he would have is to seek Moksha (emancipation and salvation) for which purpose he would live alone in mountain caves, always and consistently doing Japa (repetition) of the Tarak Mantra<sup>1</sup> (a special Mantra that gives deliverance to the soul) as well as contemplating and meditating upon the supreme Brahm till the time he leaves the mortal body (38).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *Tarak Mantra* is the divine formula that provides liberation and deliverance to the creature's soul or his Atma. It, in other words, provides the spiritual aspirant Mukti. In relation to Brahm, this Mantra is 'OM'.

Refer Canto 7, verse no. 11 as well as Canto 8 full of this Narad Parivrajak Upanishad. Refer also to Atharva Veda's *Atharvashir Upanishad*, Kandika 4.]

विविदिषासंन्यासी चेच्छतपथं गत्वाचार्यादिभिर्विप्रैस्तिष्ठ तिष्ठ महाभाग दण्डं वस्त्रं कमण्डलुं गृहाण  
प्रणवमहावाक्यग्रहणार्थं गुरुनिकटमागच्छेत्याचार्यैर्दण्डकटिसूत्रकौपीनं शाटीमेकां कमण्डलुं  
पादादिमस्तकप्रमाणमव्रणं समं सौम्यमकालपृष्ठं सलक्षणं वैणवं दण्डमेकमाचमनपूर्वकं सखा मा  
गोपायौजः सखायोऽसीन्द्रस्य वज्रोऽसि वार्त्रघ्नः शर्म मे भव यत्पापं तन्निवारयेति दण्डं  
परिग्रहेज्जगज्जीवनं जीवनाधारभूतं माते मा मन्त्रयस्व सर्वदा सर्वसौम्येति प्रणवपूर्वकं कमण्डलुं परिगृह्य  
कौपीनाधारं कटिसूत्रमोमिति गुह्याच्छादकं कौपीनमोमिति शीतवातोष्णत्राणकरं देहैकरक्षणमोमिति  
कटिसूत्रकौपीनवस्त्रमाचमनपूर्वकं योगपट्टाभिषिक्तो भूत्वा कृतार्थोऽहमिति मत्वा स्वाश्रमाचारपरो  
भवेदित्युपनिषत् ॥३९॥

vividīṣāsaṁnyāsī cecchatapathaṁ gatvācāryādibhirvipraistiṣṭha tiṣṭha  
mahābhāga daṇḍaṁ vastraṁ kamaṇḍalaṁ grhāṇa praṇava  
mahāvākyagrahaṇārthaṁ  
gurunikaṭamāgacchetyācāryairdaṇḍakāṭisūtrakaupīnaṁ

śāṭimekāṃ kamaṇḍalum pādādimastakapramāṇamavraṇaṃ  
 samaṃ saumyamakākaprṣṭhaṃ salakṣaṇaṃ vaiṇavaṃ  
 daṇḍamekamācamanapūrvakaṃ sakhā mā gopāyaujaḥ  
 sakhāyo'sīndrasya vajro'si vārtragnaḥ śarma me bhava  
 yatpāpaṃ tannivārayeti daṇḍaṃ parigrahejjagajjīvanam  
 jīvanādhārabhūtaṃ mā te mā mantrayasva sarvadā  
 sarvasaumyeti praṇavapūrvakaṃ kamaṇḍalum parigrahya  
 kaupīnādhāraṃ kaṭisūtramomiti guhyācchādaḥ  
 kaupīnamomiti śītavātoṣṇatrāṇakaraṃ dehaikarakṣaṇamomiti  
 kaṭisūtrakaupīnavastramācamanapūrvakaṃ yogapaṭṭābhīkto  
 bhūtvā kṛtārtho'hamiti matvā svāśramācāraparo bhavedityupaniṣat // 39 //

39. If he has taken to the path of Sanyas with the desire of obtaining enlightenment (without prior initiation from a Guru as narrated in verse no. 38), then, after he has proceeded for about one hundred steps and is addressed by his Guru or some other wise man such as a Brahmin who calls after him and says—‘Oh the lucky one! Stop; stop. Accept the Brahm Danda (an ascetic’s staff representing his one support and one belief in Brahm, the Supreme Being), the mendicant’s ochre clothes, and the Kamandalu (water pot). You must come to the Guru to accept the great Mantras of OM and the Mahavakyas before you proceed ahead as a Sanyasi’—he must turn back and heed their advice.

When he comes back to his elders and the Guru, he should accept the signs of formal Sanyas when they are given to him by them. These signs are the Danda (rod or staff), the Katisutra (the thread worn around the waist), the Kaupin (the loin-cloth), the Shaati (the single piece of unstitched cloth covering the upper body), and the Kamandalu (water pot). [In other words, the formal process of accepting the vows of Sanyas involves obtaining permission from one’s elders and Guru. Merely walking away as a Sanyasi is not the prescribed method, though it is not strictly prohibited as it is allowed for the Aatur Sanyasi and for those who take Sanyas at the end of the Vaanprastha phase—see verse no. 37. As it would be clear by reading the present verse, the man who is taking Sanyas is doing so directly either when he is still a Brahmachari or a Grihastha and has yet not entered the Vaanprastha phase because as soon as he has entered this stage he is deemed to have snapped all his ties with the world of the earlier phase of a householder’s life, including all his family members, compatriots and even his moral preceptor or spiritual teacher, the Guru.]

The Danda is to be made of bamboo only, and its length should not be more than the height of the Sanyasi’s body as measured from the feet to his head. It should be flawless, without any scratches or roughness, should be smooth, should not have any holes, or in any other way damaged by insects. Its colour should not be black or dark.

The aspirant should fulfill all formalities of purification such as sipping some water to clean the mouth etc. before accepting the Danda as a unique symbol of Sanyas and an exemplary renunciate and ascetic’s way of life. Then he should say the prescribed Mantra before actually accepting and holding the Danda formally. The Mantra is ‘Sakhā Ma Gaupayaujha Sakshayosindrasya Vajroasi Vatragna Sharm Me Bhav Yatpaapam Tanniyaraye’. (sakhā mā gopāyaujaḥ sakhāyo'sīndrasya vajro'si vārtragnaḥ śarma me bhava yatpāpaṃ tannivārayeti daṇḍaṃ parigrahe).

[The brief meaning is ‘Oh Danda! Protect my friend known as the Pran or the vital life that is present inside my body. You too are my best friend, and it is you who is held by Indra, the king of Gods, as his Vajra (which is his invincible weapon). It was you, in your form as the Vajra, who had killed the demon Vrittasur. Please become my protector and a provider of welfare. Whatever sins that might be still lingering inside me, please destroy them.’]

To accept the Kamandalu (kamaṇḍalum parigrahya), the Sanyasi should say OM and the prescribed Mantra (praṇavapūrvakaṃ) which is ‘Jaggajivanam Jivanaadhaarbhutam Ma Ma Mantrayasva Sarvadaa Sarvasaumyati’. (jjagajjivanam jīvanādhārabhūtaṃ mā te mā mantrayasva sarvadā sarvasaumyeti).

[You are the bearer of life and the support of life in all its forms as you carry water, which is the undisputed nectar of life. I offer this Mantra to you. Please always be benevolent upon me and never let me suffer for want of the soothing nectar of life known as water.]

The Katisutra (the waist band) should be accepted by the Mantra ‘Kaupinadharam Katisutramom’. (kaupīnādhāraṃ kaṭisūtramomiti)

[I am accepting the Katisutra which is basis of my accepting the loin-cloth or the Kaupin, which I would always wear.]

The Kaupin (the loin-cloth) is accepted by the Mantra ‘Guhyachadakam Kaupinmom’. (guhyācchādaakaṃ kaupīnamomiti)

[The Kaupin covers my private parts like a canopy or a veil, and I accept it voluntarily.]

The cloth on the upper part of the body is accepted after the following Mantra is said ‘Shitvatoshna Trankaram Daiha Rakshanmom’. (śītavātoṣṇatrāṇakaraṃ dehaikarakṣaṇamomiti)

[The cloth would protect me against cold and heat. It would afford protection to my body.]

Sipping a little water once again, he must feel fully fulfilled and spiritually contented as if he has been duly anointed and sanctified in accordance to his own wishes as well as the edicts of the scriptures. (kaṭisūtrakaupīnavastramācamanapūrvakaṃ yogapaṭṭābhiṣikto bhūtvā kṛtārtho’hamiti)

Thereafter, after this formal initiation into the fold of Sanyas, he must strive to obey its tenets most sincerely and very diligently. (matvā svāśramācāraparo)

Verily, this is what this Upanishad teaches (bhavedityupaniṣat) (39).

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[This Canto narrates the different types of Sanyas and Sanyasis (a person who has taken the vows of Sanyas), as well as the laws that govern them, and the importance of obeying these laws.]

## ॥ पञ्चमोपदेशः ॥

अथ हैनं पितामहं नारदः पप्रच्छ भगवन्सर्वकर्मनिवर्तकः संन्यास इति त्वयैवोक्तः पुनः स्वाश्रमाचारपरो भवेदित्युच्यते । ततः पितामह उवाच । शरीरस्य देहिनो जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तितुरीयावस्थाः सन्ति । तदधीनाः कर्मज्ञानवैराग्यप्रवर्तकाः पुरुषा जन्तवस्तदनुकूलाचाराः सन्ति । तथैव चेद्भगवन्संन्यासाः कतिभेदास्तदनुष्ठानभेदाः कीदृशास्तत्त्वतोऽस्माकं वक्तुमर्हसीति । तथेत्यङ्गीकृत्य तं पितामहेन ॥१॥

atha hainaṁ pitāmahaṁ nāradaḥ papraccha  
bhagavansarvakarmanivartakaḥ saṁnyāsa iti tvayaivoktaḥ  
punaḥ svāśramācāraparo bhavedityucyate /  
tataḥ pitāmaha uvāca /  
śarīrasya dehino jāgratsvapnasuṣuptituriyāvasthāḥ santi /  
tadadhīnāḥ karmajñānavairāgyapravartakāḥ puruṣā  
jantavastadanukūlācārāḥ santi /  
tathaiva cedbhagavansaṁnyāsāḥ katibhedāstadanuṣṭhānabhedāḥ  
kīdrśāstattvato'smākaṁ vaktumarhasīti /  
tathetyaṅgikṛtya taṁ pitāmahena // 1 //

1. The celestial sage Narad asked the great grandfather of creation, Brahma, 'Oh Lord! You have said that the Sanyas Ashram is when all deeds are dispensed with. And then you say that a follower of this holy way of life should obey its doctrines by carefully doing things and acting in a manner that is specially prescribed for this phase of life. These appear to be contradictory, so please clarify the position.'

Brahma replied, 'Oh Narad! A living being having a physical gross body has four states of existence of its consciousness. They are Jagrat or waking state, Swapna or dreaming state, Sushupta or deep sleep state, and Turiya or transcendental state which goes beyond the third Sushupta state. All creatures live in one of these states, and these states are therefore the base upon which all their activities depend. These states inspire or instigate the creature to do deeds, acquire Gyan (truthful knowledge; enlightenment), or develop Vairagya (renunciation, detachment and dispassion depending upon the preponderance of various factors associated with a particular stage of existence).

Since all the creatures live in one or the other of these four states of existence of consciousness, they therefore behave and act according to the characteristic qualities and features of the particular state in which their consciousness exists at any given moment.

The four Ashrams<sup>1</sup> (phases of life of a man) that are prescribed by the Srutis and Smritis (ancient scriptures such as the Vedas and Purans), such as Brahmacharya (the first phase of celibacy and student-hood), Grihastha (the second phase as a householder), Vaanprastha (the third phase when a man leaves the house and heads for pilgrimage or for the forest), and Sanyas (the fourth and final phase of complete renunciation of all things worldly), are also like these four states of existence of consciousness. Just like a man is forced to behave in accordance to the state in which

his consciousness exists in a given point of time, and all such acts of his are deemed to be normal and natural while he is in that phase but would look very odd and out of place in other states of existence, a Sanyasi is also expected to follow the rules of conduct that are prescribed for this phase of life by the scriptures without being perturbed about them or thinking guilty at observing these laws—because this is a normal way of behaviour that is prescribed for and expected from a person who lives the life of a Sanyasi.’

Hearing this, Narad asked, ‘Oh Lord! Now please tell me how many types of Sanyas are there, and about the subtle differences between the processes adopted for being initiated into each one of them.’ (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The four Ashrams have been narrated in the Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 5, verse no. 8, note no. 1 of the Atharva Veda tradition.

<sup>2</sup>A little bit of explanation would clarify the meaning here. A man in, say, the dreaming state of existence lies physically inactive because his external body is asleep, but his mind and sub-conscious are very much active, and he is living an active life in the imaginary world of his dreams. So, if he does anything in this dreaming state while appearing to be inactive physically, and then claim to have done it when he wakes up to reality, then no matter how incongruous and untruthful he might appear to be in his claims but he is actually speaking the truth.

He might not do, or simply cannot do, certain things while in the waking state of existence, but he can certainly do them in his dreams. For instance, he cannot actually jump across a tall building or fly in the air while awake, and it is absolutely absurd and incredulous even to suggest such a thing, but of course he can do so in his dreams, and then it becomes not only possible but believable too. Since any action or activity necessarily needs the involvement of the mind, it follows that the mind is active in both the waking state called the Jagrat state as well as in the dreaming state called the Swapna state of existence. But in the deep sleep state of conscious called the Sushupta state of existence the mind is defunct, and the man does not remember anything of the moment while the consciousness was in this third state. So, he might get up and perform a certain act while the mind is actually in the third state of deep sleep, and then when he actually wakes up in the sense that his mind is active in the conventional state of wakefulness, then he would not remember anything that he had done himself a while ago when his mind was in the deep sleep state.

Similarly, the same set of deeds that a man does assume different meanings depending upon which of the four Ashrams he belongs to. For instance, as a Brahmachari he studies the Vedas to acquire knowledge that would prepare him to face life and its problems with confidence. As a Grihastha he keeps in touch with the Vedas and studies them as a means of finding ways to enhance his family’s welfare and his own renown and fortunes as a learned man who believes in religious tenets, as well as to seek answers for his spiritual problems and seek guidance in the scriptures to solve the predicaments that he faces in practical life in this world. As a Vaanprastha he studies them to find ways for getting rid of his sins that he might have committed willingly or unwillingly in the course of his life and their consequences along with finding answers for the numerous spiritual problems that had been confounding him till now. And as a Sanyasi he studies them to find final solution in the form of the emancipation and salvation of his soul, the quick path to his liberation and deliverance, as well as to understand the truth about Brahm and his own Atma. During the phase of Sanyas, his main endeavour is to find final peace and rest for his soul, and to ensure that he does not have to take another birth to undergo the same series of horrors that he had to endure in the present birth.

Another example is this—as a student he eats to give sufficient and proper nourishment to his body and mind during their developmental stage, as a householder he eats to enjoy the taste of the food and build a strong and handsome body, as a Vaanprastha he eats to keep up his energy levels to help him in his wanderings, while



as a Sanyasi he eats just enough to sustain his Pran or vital life factors till the time the Pran leaves the body effortlessly and painlessly when the due time comes for discarding the gross body. As a Sanyasi he does not eat to fatten his body or pamper his taste buds and tongue; he does not eat to satisfy his desire for tasty food or fill his stomach, but just to sustain the Pran inside the body till the proper time comes for the Pran to leave it.]

संन्यासभेदैराचारभेदः कथमिति चेत्तत्त्वतस्त्वेक एव संन्यासः अज्ञानेनाशक्तिवशात्कर्मलोपतश्च त्रैविध्यमेत्य  
वैराग्यसंन्यासो ज्ञानसंन्यासो ज्ञानवैराग्यसंन्यासः कर्मसंन्यासश्चेति चातुर्विध्यमुपागतः ॥२॥

saṁnyāsabhedairācārabhedah

kathamiti cettattvatastveka eva saṁnyāsaḥ ajñānenāśaktivaśātkarmalopaśca  
traividhyametya vairāgyasaṁnyāso jñānasaṁnyāso jñānavairāgyasaṁnyāsaḥ  
karmasaṁnyāsaśceti cāturvidhyamupāgataḥ // 2 //

2. Explaining the various categories of Sanyasis and their subtle differences, Brahma elaborated—‘Oh Narad! How the type of Sanyas affects the behaviour of a practitioner of Sanyas would now be explained by me. Listen carefully.

In truth, Sanyas is essentially of one universal type (because basically it means exemplary renunciation of everything that is non-truth while accepting only one eternal Truth called the Atma which is pure cosmic universal Consciousness). But it is either due to ignorance and worldly delusions, or the inability of the mind to grasp its sublime and esoteric nuances that this august and holy institution of Sanyas has been classified into four categories<sup>1</sup>.

Hence, Sanyas is said to be of four principle types as follows—Vairagya-Sanyas, Gyan-Sanyas, Gyan-Vairagya-Sanyas, and Karma-Sanyas<sup>2</sup> (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This classification is just a creation of the mind; it is not real. Therefore, all the Sanyasis are to be equally treated, and none of them is either junior or senior to the other. Actually, the classification of Sanyas into various categories is done to mark the different paths by which a man can become a Sanaysi. There are many circumstances and processes, but all lead to one single goal. It is like reaching the same destination by different people who have taken different routes and means to do so.

It also refers to the different levels of mental development, intellectual reach, enlightenment, wisdom, erudition and self-realisation in different people who have become a Sanyasi. In other words, though each of them has become a Sanyasi, and once they do so they stand on the same footing, but the path and the method they adopted, the basic reason for their choosing the life of Sanyas, the way they had seen this world and got the inspiration to become a Sanyasi—all differ from one individual to another. And this is indicated by the category of Sanyas they belong to.

The classification of Sanyasis into different categories is also to indicate the different stages through which a spiritual aspirant passes before his obtaining final emancipation and salvation, or his final liberation and deliverance. Just like a student who has to pass many stages in his quest for knowledge, the path of Sanyas too has to pass many milestones. Each successive stage of Sanyas marks one higher stage of spiritual enlightenment and attainment. This step-by-step process is the routine method of attaining full maturity as a Sanyasi, but it does not mean that there cannot be persons who reach this stage with the minimum of effort and time because of the divine spark of enlightenment lighting inside their inner-self early than expected. For instance, even in modern system of education and professional life, there are people

who reach the top of the ladder quicker than the others, in a much younger age than the rest. But of course such people are rare.

<sup>2</sup>Refer Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda tradition, verse nos. 18-22.

The present Narad Parivrajak Upanishad also lists other categories of Sanyasis in its verse nos. 12-21 of the present Canto 5, and verse no. 2-11 of Canto 7.]

तद्यथेति दुष्टमदनाभावाच्चेति विषयवैतृष्यमेत्य प्राक्पुण्यकर्मवशात्संन्यस्तः स वैराग्यसंन्यासी ॥३॥

tadyatheti duṣṭamadanābhācceti viṣayavaitṛṣṇyametya  
prākpuṇyakarmavaśātsaṁnyastaḥ sa vairāgyasaṁnyāsī // 3 //

3. A person who has no worldly taints and corruptions affecting his mind and inner self, who is naturally not inclined to have any sort of attractions or yearnings whatsoever for any of the material sense objects of the world as an auspicious good affect of his past life, and who has developed profound sense of sincere and deep renunciation, detachment and dispassion as another good affect of these auspicious virtues—if such a man accepts the vows of Sanyas (exemplary and truthful renunciation, detachment and dispassion), then it is called ‘Vairagya-Sanyas’—i.e. a Sanyas dominated by the glorious virtue of Vairagya—sincere and truthful renunciation for all things of this material world of sense objects (3).

शास्त्रज्ञानात्पाप पुण्यलोकानुभवश्रवणात्प्रपञ्चोपरतः क्रोधर्ष्यासूयाहङ्काराभिमानात्मकसर्वसंसारं निर्वृत्य दारेषणाधनेषणालोकेषणात्मकदेहवासनां शास्त्रवासनां लोकवासनां त्यक्त्वा वमनान्नमिव प्रकृतीयं सर्वमिदं हेयं मत्वा साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नो यः संन्यस्यति स एवं ज्ञानसंन्यासी ॥४॥

śāstrajñānātpāpa puṇyalokānubhavaśravaṇātpapañcoparataḥ  
krodherṣyāsūyāhaṅkārahimānātmakasarvasaṁsāraṁ nirvṛtya  
dāreṣaṇādhaṇeṣaṇālokeṣaṇātmakadehavāsanāṁ śāstravāsanāṁ lokavāsanāṁ  
tyaktvā vamanānnamiva prakṛtiyaṁ sarvamidaṁ heyam matvā  
sādhana-catustaya-saṁpanno yaḥ saṁnyasati sa eva jñāna-saṁnyāsī // 4 //

4. A person who has developed natural dispassion towards this world and its material sense objects as a result of Gyan or truthful knowledge acquired by various avenues such as by studying of the scriptures, or by realising the worthlessness and falsehood of the world as a result of personal experience, or by tasting both the good and the bad effects of deeds leading to constant state of uneasiness and flux.

His intellect and wise mind tells him about the corrupt world and its tainted nature, a world that is full of such negative traits as having, inter alia, Krodh (anger), Irshya (jealousy and ill-will), Asuya (finding faults with others while being full of faults himself), Ahankar (false sense of pride and ego), and Abhiman (pride, vanity, arrogance and hypocrisy) as its integral part. He strives to keep his mind aloof from such a tarnished world.

He abandons all desires that relate to a woman, wealth and fame which symbolise a person’s three natural Vasanas (passions) called Daihik Vasana (passions and desires that relate to his sense organs and their natural wish for gratification), Shastra Vasana (desire to get mastery over the scriptures) and Loka Vasana (desire to acquire name, fame, wealth and material prosperity in this world). Just like an

ordinary man treats vomited food with disgust and repugnance, he treats these Vasanas with equal disdain.

Instead, he arms himself with the four holy Saadhans<sup>1</sup> or means for spiritual enhancement, and thus empowered, he accepts the august vows of Sanyas. Acceptance of Sanyas by such a man is called ‘Gyan Sanyas’—i.e. a Sanyas which is marked by the dominance of Gyan—truthful knowledge, enlightenment, erudition and wisdom—as a factor which inspires a man to take to the life of Sanyas (4).

[Note--<sup>1</sup>The four *Saadhans* are called ‘Saadhan Chatushtya’, and the term refers to the four fold spiritual disciplines in the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta. They are the following—(1) Vivek (wisdom and discrimination; intelligent interpretation of given set of information to arrive at the optimum solution; the best use of the faculty of thinking and contemplation to separate the grain from the chaff. (2) Vairagya (total renunciation and dispassion; a sense of complete detachment and non-involvement. (3) Samaadhistak (the group of six spiritual disciplines having six steps such as Saam or tranquility and calmness, Dama or self restraint or self control, Uparati or the ability of the external sense organs to refrain from involvement in and pursuit of the sense objects in this material world, Titiksha or forbearance and tolerance, Shradha or unwavering faith, conviction and belief in one’s spiritual path, and Samaadhaan or concentration and finding of solutions to vexing spiritual problems by focusing of the faculty of mind and intellect to remove doubts and confusions). And, (4) Mumuksha (desire for liberation and deliverance of the soul; seeking the soul’s emancipation and salvation).]

क्रमेण सर्वमभ्यस्य सर्वमनुभूय ज्ञानवैराग्याभ्यां स्वरूपानुसंधानेन देहमात्रावशिष्टः संन्यस्य जातरूपधरो भवति स ज्ञानवैराग्यसंन्यासी ॥५॥

krameṇa sarvamabhyasya sarvamanubhūya jñānavairāgyābhyām  
svarūpānusandhānena dehamātrāvaśiṣṭaḥ saṁnyasya  
jātarūpadharo bhavati sa jñānavairāgyasaṁnyāsī // 5 //

5. A person who has gone through the ups and downs of life, who has experienced all the aspects of life, both the pleasant as well as the unpleasant, in all its hues by passing through all the three phases of life (such as the Brahmacharya or life as a celibate student, a Grishastha or as a householder, and a Vaanprastha who is a person who leaves the house and embarks upon pilgrimage or heads for a lonely life away from the hustle and bustle of the world), and in the process has gathered valuable information about the true nature of the world as well as the ‘self’ by being analytical and intelligent in interpreting each of his experiences—such a person is filled with an overwhelming sense of renunciation and dispassion towards the false and deluding world and its objects. Instead, he learns the sublime truth about his own ‘self’ which is pure and truthful consciousness that is an eternal and imperishable entity. He would rather remain submerged in the thoughts of this blissful ‘self’ which gives him stable peace and tranquillity than remain agitated and restless by thinking about the selfish world which is nevertheless unstable.

In other words, being discriminating, wise and intelligent, he would develop a natural sense of renunciation, dislike and dispassion towards this false material world of sense objects and their equally false charms of which he has had a first-hand experience, and instead develop an affinity for his truthful ‘self’ which gives him eternal peace, happiness, contentedness and bliss.

Since he remains aloof from the world and does not get involved in its ensnaring quagmire, he remains as innocent and incorrupt as a little child or a new-born infant who is yet un-tarnished, un-affected and un-influenced by the myriad spiritual corruptions, countless faults and numerous negative forces of the world in which he lives.

Indeed, this eclectic and sublime mental state of renunciation and dispassion obtained by a combination of knowledge about the reality and truth of existence, and a first-hand experience of life with all its bitter realities, is called ‘Gyan-Vairagya-Sanyas’—because both the eclectic virtues of Gyan and Vairagya have played a stellar role in equal proportion that have inspired him to take to the life of Sanyas (5).

ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य गृही भूत्वा वानप्रस्थाश्रममेत्य वैराग्यभावेऽप्याश्रमक्रमानुसारेण यः संन्यस्यति स कर्मसंन्यासी ॥६॥

brahmacaryaṃ samāpya grhī bhūtvā vānaprasthāśramametya  
vairāgyabhāve’pyāśramakramānusāreṇa yaḥ  
saṃnyasyati sa karmasaṃnyāsī // 6 //

6. A person who lives through all the three phases of life, such as a Brahmachari, a Grihastha and a Vaanprastha, in a systematic manner, and then takes to the life of Sanyas simply because this is the ancient tradition that has sanction of the scriptures, though he might not have actually developed renunciation and dispassion towards the world, its attractions and his responsibilities, then this is called ‘Karma Sanyas’.

In other words, he becomes a Sanyasi because it is part of his religious obligations, it is his duty to follow tradition, and it is expected of him that he takes the vows of Sanyas as an upholder of auspicious and righteous way of living that is ordained by the scriptures, and if he does not do so he would be subject to ignominy and accused of violating traditional norms and prescriptions of the scriptures, though the most important criterion for Sanyas, which is inculcation of a deep sense of sincere renunciation, profound dispassion and total detachment towards the world and its material objects, might not be present in him. Such a man is called a Karma Sanyasi, and the form of Sanyas is called ‘Karma Sanyas’ (6).

[Note—A Karma Sanyasi takes to the path of Sanyas as his moral duty and religious obligation rather than an internal desire to renounce the world out of enlightenment and realisation of its falsehood, as well as a sincere desire for obtaining spiritual liberation and deliverance along with attaining true peace of mind and bliss for the soul. Truthfully speaking, Gyan and Vairagya lack in such people, hence this type of Sanyas is no match for that which is marked by these two eclectic virtues.]

ब्रह्मचर्येण संन्यस्य संन्यासाज्जातरूपधरो वैराग्यसंन्यासी । विद्वत्संन्यासी ज्ञानसंन्यासी विविदिषासंन्यासी कर्मसंन्यासी ॥७॥

brahmacaryeṇa saṃnyasya saṃnyāsājñātarūpadharo vairāgyasaṃnyāsī /  
vidvatsaṃnyāsī jñānasaṃnyāsī vividiṣāsaṃnyāsī karmasaṃnyāsī // 7 //

7. A person who is so overwhelmed by a deep-rooted sense of renunciation, detachment and dispassion that he yearns to renounce the world even while he is still in the first phase of life as a Brahmachari (a celibate student), and accepts the life of

Sanyas without entering the second phase of Grihastha (householder), becomes as innocent and holy as a little child or a new-born infant who is yet not influenced by the corruptions and taints of the world. Indeed, this is called 'Vairagya-Sanyas'.

In other words, when Sanyas is accepted by being driven by an inborn urge for renunciation and dispassion even while the person is still in the earlier phase of life as a student, when this world fails to attract the aspirant's mind by its charms and temptations, then this sort of Sanyas is called Vairagya Sanyas. In this sort of Sanyas, natural sense of renunciation, detachment and dispassion are so overwhelming, profound and robust besides being natural, and not imposed or pretentious, that no amount of enticements and cajoling would ever tempt his mind to swerve towards the charms of the material world. Hence, this sort of Sanyas is self-sustaining and self-enhancing.

An enlightened Sanyasi who is predominantly intelligent, wise, learned, erudite and analytical in his approach is called a 'Gyan-Sanyasi' because 'Gyan' or knowledge is what has made him take to the path of renunciation of falsehood and acceptance of truth; it is Gyan that is the driving force for his conscious decision to take to Sanyas, rather than any other considerations or compulsions.

On the other hand, a Sanyasi who has taken this vow of Sanyas because this is the correct direction in which a righteous and religious person is supposed to go during the final years of his life, is called a 'Karma-Sanyasi'. He is simply following tradition and has taken Sanyas because this is the ordained and prescribed way which he must follow or obey, without questioning its utility for him, or whether he fits in the bill or not (7).

कर्मसंन्यासोऽपि द्विविधः निमित्तसंन्यासोऽनिमित्तसंन्यासश्चेति । निमित्तस्त्वातुरः । अनिमित्तः क्रमसंन्यासः ।  
आतुरः सर्वकर्मलोपः प्राणस्योत्क्रमणकालसंन्यासः सनिमित्तसंन्यासः । द्वाङ्गो भूत्वा सर्वं कृतकं  
नश्वरमिति देहादिकं सर्वं हेयं प्राप्य ॥८-९॥

हंसः शुचिषद्वसुरन्तरिक्षसद्भोता वेदिषदतिथिर्दुरोणसत् । नृषद्वरसदृतसद्व्योमसदब्जा गोजा ऋतजा अद्रिजा  
ऋतं बृहत् ॥९०॥

karmasaṁnyāso'pi dvividhaḥ nimittasaṁnyāso'nimittasaṁnyāśāceti /  
nimittastvāturaḥ / animittaḥ kramasaṁnyāśaḥ /  
āturaḥ sarvakarmalopaḥ prāṇasyotkramaṇakālasaṁnyāśaḥ  
sanimittasaṁnyāśaḥ /  
dr̥ḍhāṅgo bhūtvā sarvaṁ kṛtakam naśvaramiti dehādikaṁ  
sarvaṁ heyaṁ prāpya // 8-9 //  
haṁsaḥ śuciṣadvasurantarikṣasaddhotā vediṣadatidhirduroṇasat /  
nṛṣadvarasadṛtasadvyomasadabjā gojā ṛtajā adriajā ṛtaṁ br̥hat // 10 //

8-10. Karma Sanyas is of two types—first is called 'Nimitta-Sanyas', and the second is called 'A-nimitta Sanyas'. [The word 'Nimitta' means factor, motive, cause, inducement, account, reason. The word 'A-nimitta' is the opposite of Nimitta.]

Aatur Sanyas comes under the category of Nimitta Sanyas. [In other words, when the spiritual aspirant takes the vows of Sanyas because he is very Aatur or eager to renounce the world and seek his spiritual liberation and deliverance, then it is called 'Nimitta Sanyas' as this eagerness on his part is the motivating factor, the cause

and the driving force that has impelled him, that has inspired him to become a Sanyasi.]

On the other hand, pure Karma Sanyas comes under the category of 'A-nimitta Sanyas'. [When a man becomes a Sanyasi because he must do so as this is the established tradition, and he should not violate ancient laws, then renunciation is not the 'Nimitta' or causative factor for his taking to the life of Sanyas. He has, in fact, taken to Sanyas as a religious duty and a process ordained by the scriptures as well as by tradition instead of being inspired by internal Vairagya or Gyan. Hence, it is 'A-nimitta' Sanyas—i.e. renunciation not due to some inborn virtue of dispassion or enlightenment, but undertaken as part of established tradition.]

When a person becomes sick and is unable to do his routine worldly deeds, he prefers to die and get rid of his agonies and torments. Physical incompetence or inability to perform deeds and take actions in this world also leads one to accept a virtual life of Sanyas as he is unable to do anything, fulfill his obligations, live up to his expectations, and generally unable to enjoy the world and its sense objects. So, when one takes the vows of Sanyas as a result of diseases that are bodily crippling for him, then this is called Nimitta Sanyas as well as Aatur Sanyas. [The first sort of Sanyas is called 'Nimitta' because the diseases and physical infirmities have been the cause of his decision to take Sanyas—they become a 'Nimitta' or causative and motivating factor. It is also called 'Aatur' because he is very eager to get rid of this miserable body and a wretched life that has become a constant burden for him, and instead seek liberation and deliverance from it by taking to the path of Sanyas.]

A wise and erudite person who has a healthy and strong body but still takes to the life of Sanyas as a result of sprouting of enlightenment and profound wisdom that makes him firmly convinced of the fact that this world, along with all the material things and sense objects, as well as the body which one is so proud of and which is so handsome and strong, are false, transient and perishable, that therefore they cannot ever give eternity, peace and bliss to the man—verily, such a man is like the Hans (the divine Swan) which is immaculate and the wisest amongst all the birds that have their habitat in the sky. He is like the Vasu (i.e. the Sun God) that moves majestically across the sky. He is like the Hota (the priest who offers oblations to the sacred fire during fire sacrifices) as well as the Fire God who is honoured at the altar of the same fire sacrifice. He is also the honoured guest who is always welcome and shown the greatest of respect in the house of noble and righteous householders. He is the most exalted and highly respected amongst humans. He is deemed to be as honourable and revered as the best of things in this world. He is deemed to be a living embodiment of the eternal Truth that is universal and uniform. It is he who is symbolised by the subtle 'truth' of the sky element (i.e. he possesses all the grand virtues of the sky element, such as being universal, infinite, fathomless, incorrupt, all-pervading, all-encompassing etc.). It is he who emerges from the water element (i.e. he is like Lord Hiranyagarbha (Vishnu and Brahma) who has emerged from the primordial cosmic fluid, and from whom the rest of the creation evolved; he is like the 'lotus' that emerges from the middle of the water in a pond). It is he who is revealed in the form of all living beings who speak and are represented by those who are born from a cow or are born on earth, as well as all forms of knowledge that is revealed by Vaani or speech. It is he who is born or revealed from Truth. It is he who is born from mountains but is immensely different from the latter, being the only and absolute Truth in creation. [This probably refers to the statues that are carved out of stones extracted from mountains and worshipped as some deity. It means that far from being

a gross and lifeless entity like the statue carved from a mountain stone, he is consciousness personified.] (8-10).

ब्रह्मव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वं नश्वरमिति निश्चित्याथो क्रमेण यः संन्यस्यति स संन्यासोऽनिमित्तसंन्यासः । ११ ॥

brahmavyatiriktaṁ sarvaṁ naśvaramiti niścityātho krameṇa yaḥ  
saṁnyasyati sa saṁnyāso'nimittasaṁnyāsaḥ // 11 //

11. A spiritual aspirant who takes the eclectic path of Sanyas with the firm conviction that the supreme transcendental Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, is the only Absolute Truth in this creation, and that anything other than Brahm is imperishable and non-truth—then this sort of Sanyas is known as ‘A-nimitta Sanyas’. His Sanyas is without any cause or motivation. It is a natural phenomenon for him to discard that which is non-truth and false, and accept that which is the truth and reality. [That is, a wise and enlightened aspirant who has no worldly reason for becoming a Sanyasi except the fact that he finds everything other than the Consciousness as false and non-truth, and decides to abandon this falsehood and non-truth and pursue truth and eternity instead, is said to have become a Sanyasi without any ‘Nimitta’ or worldly cause or motivation. Some of the causes have already been listed in the previous verses—for instance one’s diseases or physical inabilities which make life a burden for him and which prevent him from enjoying the comforts and pleasures of this world and its material objects. He becomes a Sanyasi in order to hide his inadequacies and incompetence behind the façade of Sanyas-hood. Had he been healthy and had had access to this material world, probably he wouldn’t have imagined of Sanyas even in his dreams! Another reason is the compulsion for following tradition which requires a man to take Sanyas in old age. No such factor is applicable here.] (11).

संन्यासः षड्विधो भवति । कुटीचको बहूदको हंसः परमहंसः तुरीयातीतोऽवधूतश्चेति । १२ ॥

saṁnyāsaḥ ṣaḍvidho bhavati /  
kuṭīcako bahūdako haṁsaḥ paramahaṁsaḥ turīyātīto'vadhūtaśceti // 12 //

12. A Sanyasi is again classified into six categories as follows—Kutichak, Bahudak, Hansa, Paramhans, Turiyatit, and Avadhut (12).

[Note—Refer Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda tradition, verse nos. 23-30. Refer also the present Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 7, verse nos. 2-11.]

कुटीचकः शिखायज्ञोपवीती दण्डकमण्डलुधरः कौपीनकन्थाधरः पितृमातृगुर्वारिधनपरः  
पितरखनित्रिशिख्यादिमन्त्रसाधनपरः एकत्रान्नादनपरः श्वेतोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधारी त्रिदण्डः । बहूदकः  
शिखादिकन्थाधरस्त्रिपुण्ड्रधारी कुटीचकवत्सर्वसमो मधुकरवृत्त्याष्टकवलाशी । १३ ॥

kuṭīcakaḥ śikhāyajñopavīṭī daṇḍakamaṇḍaludharaḥ kaupīnakanthādharaḥ  
pitṛmātrgurvārādhanaparaḥ piṭharakhanitraśikyādimantrasāadhanapara  
ekatrānnādanaparaḥ śvetordhvapunḍradhārī tridaṇḍaḥ /  
bahūdakaḥ śikhādikanthādharastrīpunḍradhārī kuṭīcakavatsarvasamo  
madhukaravṛtṭyāṣṭakavalāśī // 13 //

13. [In the context of verse nos. 13-21, refer also to Canto 7, verse nos. 2-11 of this Upanishad.]

A Kutichak Sanyasi sports (wears) the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the head) and the Sutra (the sacred thread, also called the Yagyopavit). He also carries the ascetic's staff or rod called the Danda, the water-pot called the Kamandalu, the loin-cloth called the Kaupin, and an over-garment made of a coarse single piece of cloth or old pieces of torn clothes stitched together in a rough manner, called a Kantha.

He always remains involved in selflessly serving his parents and Guru (moral preceptor and teacher).

He also keeps a pot for collecting food, called a Paatra, a tool for digging earth, called the Khanti (which is like a pointed iron spike), and a sling bag, called a Jholi, with him. He always remains engrossed in meditation and repetition of Mantras. He takes food obtained from one single place (instead of eating it first and going to another place to get more food to satisfy his urge for eating more, or because his taste buds have got the better of him).

He wears the vertical mark of 'Shwet Pundra' on his forehead (i.e. he has the holy lines marked by white chalk-powder made into a past by mixing with water that is worn on the forehead by all initiated Hindus).

He is expected to always carry the Tridand in his hands. [The 'Tridand' is the ascetic's staff made of three pieces of wood—hence called 'Tri' or three + 'Danda' or rod. It basically consists of three staffs or sticks tied together, each made up of bamboo. There is a main shaft, and the two smaller pieces used as a handle measure about four fingers width in length. This is done for easy carrying. The word 'Danda' stands for self control, and therefore these three staffs stand for a combined control of the mind, called the Mana Dand, control over the speech, called the Vaak Dand, and control over the body, called Kaya Dand. This Danda is like a scepter held by a king; it is a symbol of his spiritual kingship and distinguishes him from the rest of the people; it is his symbol of moral and spiritual authority.]

A Bahudak Sanyasi, like the Kutichak, also wears the tuft on the head, the sacred thread across his chest, the loin-cloth across the waist, the roughly sewn over-garment on the upper part of his body, and carries the staff and the water-pot in his hands. He too sports the Tripundra (the line marked on the forehead) like the Kutichak Sanyasi.

He has exemplary sense of equanimity and evenness, and treats everyone in the same way without any sense of discrimination.

He survives on food obtained by begging from different houses, and eats only eight mouthfuls at one meal. [The difference between Kutichak and Bahudak is obvious here—whereas a Kutichak eats food obtained from one place, a Bahudak collects food from more than one household. Again, a Bahudak is expected to eat only eight mouthfuls, but no such restrictions have been explicitly put on a Kutichak.] (13).

हंसो जटाधारी त्रिपुण्ड्रोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रधारी असंकल्पमाधूकरान्नाशी कौपीनखण्डतुण्डधारी ॥१४॥

haṁso jaṭādhārī tripuṇḍrordhvapuṇḍradhārī  
asamkṛptamādhukarānnāśī kaupīnakhaṇḍatuṇḍadhārī // 14 //



14. A Hans Sanyasi wears a lock of matted hairs on his head, wears the vertical lines of the Tripundra<sup>1</sup> (literally the three lines) on his forehead, brings food by begging from any house visited at random, wears a small piece of loin-cloth around his private parts, and carries a Tumbi (a hollowed-out and dried shell of the pumpkin or gourd which acts as a water-pot) (14).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Tripundra* has been defined in note no. 2 of verse no. 3 of Canto 7 of the present Upanishad.]

परमहंसः शिखायज्ञोपवीतरहितः पञ्चगृहेष्वेकरात्रान्नान्नपरः करपात्री एककौपीनधारी शाटीमेकामेकं वैणवं दण्डमेकशाटीधरो वा भस्मोद्धूलनपरः सर्वत्यागी ।१५॥

paramahaṃsaḥ śikhāyajñopavītarahitaḥ pañcagrheśvekarātrānnādanaparaḥ  
karapātrī ekakaupīnadhārī śāṭimekamekaṃ vaiṇavaṃ daṇḍamekaśāṭīdharo  
vā bhasmoddhūlanaparaḥ sarvatyāgī // 15 //

15. A Param-hans Sanyasi does not sport a tuft of hair on the head or the sacred thread across the chest. He collects or accepts food from five houses, and eats once a day at night. He never stores food for the next day, and never visits the same house twice for food.

He keeps with him only a loin-cloth, a piece of cloth to cover his body (upper part), and an ordinary staff made of bamboo. He either covers his body with this single body-wrapping cloth, or simply smears ash of the fire sacrifice to cover it.

A Param-hans Sanyasi is highly non-possessive, and is supposed to have completely renounced everything in this world (15).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 28-29, 30-31; Canto 6, verse nos. 25-26.]

तुरीयातीतो गोमुखः फलाहारी । अन्नाहारी चेद्गृहतये देहमात्रावशिष्टो दिगम्बरः कुणपवच्छरीरवृत्तिकः ।१६॥

turiyātīto gomukhaḥ phalāhārī / annāhārī cedgrhatraye dehamātrāvaśiṣṭo  
digambaraḥ uṇapavaccharīravṛttikaḥ // 16 //

16. A Turiyatit Sanyasi is like a cow that survives on whatever that is made available to him as a grace of the Lord. He eats like a cow—i.e. he collects food in the cupped palms of his hands and eats directly from it like a cow, using his tongue and mouth to lick and pick up morsels of food. [That is, he does not use any pot to keep the food and then use his fingers to serve as a spoon to eat. Refer also to verse no. 38 of the present Canto 5.]

He never asks anyone for anything whatsoever. He usually eats only fruits, and if he eats cereals etc., then he collects food from three houses only. [Compare with the Bahudak and the Param-hans.]

As personal belongings, he has nothing but his own body as his only possession.

He remains naked (refer Canto 3, verse no. 31), and strives to make his sense organs irrelevant and inactive as if they were non-existent for all practical purposes, or part of a dead body (refer Canto 3, verse no. 27, 48, 50-51, 90) (16).

अवधूतस्त्वनियमोऽभिस्तपतितवर्जनपूर्वकं सर्ववर्णेष्वजगरवृत्त्याहारपरः स्वरूपानुसंधानपरः ॥१७॥

avadhūtaṣṭvanīyamo'bhīśastapātītavarjanapūrvakam  
sarvavarṇeṣvajagaravṛttyāhāraparaḥ svarūpānusandhānaparaḥ // 17 //

17. An Avadhut Sanyasi knows of no bondages, fetters, compulsions, obligations or formalities. [That is, he believes in none of these things, because he is eternally free and liberated spiritually.]

He snaps all contacts with corrupt, unscrupulous and tainted people, and with those who have fallen from their chosen paths.

Living like a python, he accepts whatever food is available to him for survival, without discriminating between the Varnas (class or caste) of the people from whose household he accepts food. [That is, he does not bother himself whether the householder who gives him food belongs to an upper class or a lower class. The only thing that he keeps in mind while accepting food is that the giver should not be corrupt and sinful, as any food from such people would have an adverse effect on his own mind and spirit.]

He remains ever engrossed in contemplation and thoughts of the true nature and form of his truthful Atma which is pure consciousness (17).

आतुरो जीवति चेत्क्रमसंन्यासः कर्तव्यः ॥१८॥

āturo jīvati cetkramasaṁnyāsaḥ kartavyaḥ // 18 //

18. If a man who is eager to accept the vows of Sanyas (and renounce this world of falsehood and material sense objects which are illusive and entrapping by their inherent nature, and instead opt for the path of spiritual liberation and deliverance) wishes to have a long life then he must live through all the other three phases of life (as a Brahmachari, a Grihastha, and a Vaanprastha) before he takes the vows of Sanyas at the end of this sequence (as ordained by the scriptures and tradition)<sup>1</sup>. Such a Sanyas is called 'Kram Sanyas' as it involves passing through all the prescribed phases in life in an orderly manner, step-by-step, before one actually accepts the hallowed life of a Sanyasi. [The word 'Kram' means a sequence; a proper series, an order or chain of events; a step-by-step approach to anything; a method or systematic way of doing anything; a route or proper way of reaching one's destination. Hence, 'Kram Sanyas' refers to the step-by-step approach to this holy way of life no matter how eager a man is to become a Sanyasi and renounce the world.] (18).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>This systemic and orderly way helps him to experience all the pros and cons of life and see the truth of the world. This only helps to reinforce his commitment to the life of Sanyas. Otherwise it might happen that he becomes disillusioned midway when he faces the harsh reality of a Sanyas way of life and regret his decision of becoming a Sanyasi. This would be more harmful to him than not taking Sanyas at all. The bitter experience that he has had of the world while he lived in it as a Brahmachari, as a Grihastha, and as a Vaanprastha, the bitter truth that he has learnt about the world not giving him peace, rest, happiness, comfort and fulfilment in the true sense inspite of his best of efforts and also inspite of his devoting his entire life serving this world and its inhabitants—and such other factors, when properly thought of and analysed, create a sincere renunciation for this world, and when Sanyas is taken with this bitter experience then it is more sustainable and sincere.]

कुटीचकबहूदकहंसाणां ब्रह्मचर्याश्रमादितुरीयाश्रमवत् कुटीचकादीनां संन्यासविधिः ॥१९॥

kuṭīcakabahūdakahamṣānām

brahmacaryāśramāditurīyāśramavat kuṭīcakādīnām saṁnyāsavidhiḥ // 19 //

19. For a Kutichak, Bahudak and Hansa Sanyasi it is prescribed that they should enter this fourth phase of life of Sanyas only after having lived through the earlier three phases of life as a Brahmachari, a Grihastha and a Vaanprastha in this order (19).

परमहंसादित्रयाणां न कटिसूत्रं न कौपीनं न वस्त्रं न कमण्डलुर्न दण्डः । सार्ववर्णैकभैक्षाटनपरत्वं जातरूपधरत्वं विधिः । संन्यासकालेऽप्यलंबुद्धिपर्यन्तमधीत्य तदनन्तरं कटिसूत्रं कौपीनं दण्डं वस्त्रं कमण्डलुं सर्वमप्सु विसृज्याथ जातरूपधरश्चरेन्न कन्धावेशो नाध्येतव्यो न वक्तव्यो न श्रोतव्यमन्यत्किंचित्प्राणवादन्यं न तर्कं पठेन्न शब्दमपि बृहच्छब्दान्नाध्यापयेन्न महद्वाचो विग्लापनं गिरा पाण्यादिना संभाषणं नान्यस्माद्वा विशेषेण न शूद्रस्त्रीपतितोदक्या संभाषणं न यतेर्देवपूजा नोत्सवदर्शनं तीर्थयात्रावृत्तिः ॥२०॥

paramahamṣāditrayāṇām na kaṭisūtram na kaupīnam

na vastram na kamaṇḍalurna daṇḍaḥ /

sārvavarṇaikabhaikṣāṭanaparavatvaṁ jātarūpadharatvaṁ vidhiḥ /

saṁnyāsakāle'pyalamḥbuddhiparyantamadhītya

tadanantaram kaṭisūtram kaupīnam daṇḍam vastram kamaṇḍalam

sarvamapsu visrjyātha jātarūpadharaścarena kanthāveśo nādhyetavyo

na vaktavyo na śrotavyamanyatkiñcitpraṇavādanyam

na tarkam paṭhenna śabdamapi br̥hacchabdānnādhyāpayenna

mahadvāco viglāpanam girā pāṇyādinā sambhāṣaṇam

nānyasmādvā viśeṣeṇa na śūdrastrīpatitodakyā sambhāṣaṇam

na yaterdevapūjā notsavadarśanam tīrthayātrāvṛttiḥ // 20 //

20. There is no compulsion for a Param-hans, a Turiyatit and a Avadhut Sanyasi to wear the waist-band, a loin-cloth or any other sort of body-covering cloth, or even to carry an ascetic's staff and a water-pot. [They are optional for him.]

They can adopt the appearance of an infant child who remains naked and is unconcerned about it (i.e. assume a 'Jaatroop' form which means the naked form in which a child is born in this world). They are free to beg for food and accept it from all kinds of households belonging to any caste or class in the society. [This is to indicate the fact that these categories of Sanyasis are so holy and pure that food taken even from a low-caste household would not be able to affect or undermine their high ethical, moral, mental and spiritual stature. Nothing can pollute or defile them. Food for them is like an offering to the sacred fire burning inside their body that sustains their Pran and Atma, their life and conscious 'self' respectively; it is a fire which is so pure, holy, powerful and divine that it can purify everything that is put into it rather than getting polluted by it no matter how bad or tainted or corrupt that offering is.]

Until the time an aspirant is firmly convinced at the time of accepting the vows of Sanyas that whatever he has studied is enough for him, he ought to continue with his pursuit of knowledge and learning. When he is completely satisfied with

what he has learnt, when truthful wisdom and enlightenment sprouts in his bosom, when he feels fulfilled and realises that he needs no more knowledge, it is then that he should discard the loin-cloth and the waist-band etc. and immerse them in the water.

If he prefers to remain naked (Digambar) then he must not keep any type of cloth, even the patched over-garment, to cover his body. Besides this, he must abstain from reading and teaching, giving discourses, attending discussions, lectures or debates, or hear narrations of scriptures and rendering of formal prayers.

There is no need for him to study logic, or learn the art of debate and public speaking. [This is because he is not expected to attend debates and discussions or give discourses and lectures. Rather, he must lead a serene and quiet life of a reclusive hermit who spends his precious time in meditation and contemplation, thinking of the supreme Truth and experiencing the drip of bliss that accompanies the higher stages of self-realisation rather than bothering about exhibiting his scholarship and showcasing his oratory skills in public forums to gain name, honour, titles and goodwill as well as a followership of disciples. Refer also to Canto 3, verse nos. 56-60, 71; Canto 4, verse nos. 14-16, 19; and Canto 7, verse no. 1.]

He must only do constant Japa (constant repetition) with the divine Mantra of OM that pertains to Pranav, the supreme transcendental Brahm (rather than wasting his time and energy by entering in debates, giving discourses and lectures, or even teaching and reading the scriptures, for, one, he has not much time left for these as death is fast approaching, and two, it is deemed that he has already become sufficiently wise and enlightened to have realised the truth and the essence of the teaching of the scriptures by the time he has reached the stage of Sanyas, and therefore there is no real need for him to waste any time and energy on its discovery). [Refer Canto 7, verse no. 11.]

It is prohibited for him to waste the energy of speech in worthless things. It is also prohibited for him to talk in any sign language. [This is because, for one, it is more tiring than actual speaking as it requires special mental skills and exertion to express one's wishes correctly in sign language and make the other person understand one's real intentions, and second, it is subject to more wrong interpretations than the actual spoken word, leading to more confusions and perplexities which is absolutely not expected from a Sanyasi.]

He must take extra precaution of not talking to any Shudra (a low-caste man), a woman or a fallen man. He must not talk with a menstruating woman at any cost. It is equally prohibited for him to participate in religious or other festivals, events, formal forms of rituals and worship, to go on pilgrimages and visit pilgrim sites, to worship and offer prayers to Gods and other deities (including idols and other symbols)<sup>1</sup> (20).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer also the following Upanishads—(i) Sam Veda tradition—Maitreyu-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 21, 26; Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 50-59; and Sanyaso-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 74-75, 97. (ii) Atharva Veda tradition—Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 20.

External forms of worship have been prohibited in—(a) Krishna Yajur Veda's following Upanishads—Pran Agnihotra Upanishad; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 69, 74; Canto 3, verse no. 26, 29-30; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 21-24. (b) Shukla Yajur Veda's Advai Tarak Upanishad, verse nos. 5, 10, 13. (c) Atharva Veda's Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 20.

The fact that the same divinity known as the supreme Brahm resides in all the pilgrim sites is affirmed in Atharva Veda's Atharvashir Upanishad, Kandika (Canto) 4. This assertion implies that a wise man is one who should not roam around in different pilgrim sites in search of the Truth, seeking the Lord here and there in this

mortal world, but attempt to find that Brahm in his own inner 'self' as his Atma which is immortal.

The Advai-tarak Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse nos. 5, 10, 13, stresses that real Mukti or spiritual liberation is obtained when the aspirant turns inwards and searches eternal peace and bliss inside his own self rather somewhere outside.

The Tejobindu Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 6, verse nos. 21-24 clearly stresses that all forms of ritualistic worship or symbol worship do not in any way help the spiritual aspirant to realise Brahm and reach his spiritual goal of liberation and salvation.]

पुनर्यतिविशेषः । कुटीचकस्यैकत्र भिक्षा बहूदकस्यासंकलृप्तं माधूकरं हंसस्याष्टगृहेष्वष्टकवलं परमहंसस्य पञ्चगृहेषु करपात्रं फलाहारी गोमुखं तुरीयातीतस्यावधूतस्याजगरवृत्तिः सार्ववर्णिकेषु यतिनैकरात्रं वसेन्न कस्यापि नमेत्तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्न ज्येष्ठो यो न स्वरूपज्ञः । स ज्येष्ठोऽपि कनिष्ठो हस्ताभ्यां नद्युत्तरणं न कुर्यान्न वृक्षमारोहेन यानादिरूढो न क्रयविक्रयपरो न किञ्चिद्विनिमयपरो न दाम्भिको नानृतवादी न यतेः किञ्चित्कर्तव्यमस्त्यस्ति चेत्सांकर्यम् । तस्मान्मननादौ संन्यासिनामधिकारः ॥२१॥

punaryativiśeṣaḥ / kuṭīcasyaikatra bhikṣā bahūdakasyāsaṁklṛptaṁ  
mādhukaraṁ haṁsasyāṣṭagrheṣvaṣṭakavalam  
paramahaṁsasya pañcagrheṣu karapātraṁ phalāhāro gomukhaṁ  
turiyātītasyaāvadhūtasyājagaravṛttiḥ sārva-varṇikeṣu yatirnaikarātraṁ vasenna  
kasyāpi nametturiyātītāvadhūtayorna jyeṣṭho yo na svarūpajñaḥ /  
sa jyeṣṭho'pi kaniṣṭho hastābhyāṁ nadyuttaraṇaṁ na kuryānna  
vrkṣamārohenna yānādirūḍho na krayavikrayaparo na kiñcidvinimayaparo  
na dāmbhiko nānṛtavādī na yateḥ kiṁcitkartavyamastyasti cetsāṁkaryam /  
tasmānmananādaḥ saṁnyāsinaṁadhikāraḥ // 21 //

21. Once again, some special rules and tenets of the life of Sanyas are being narrated.

For a Kutichak Sanyasi it is ordained that he must accept food by begging from only one place.

A Bahudak Sanyasi is to beg for food from houses selected at random.

A Hans Sanyasi is to beg from only eight households and accept eight mouthfuls of food in all. [That is, one mouthful of food from one household.]

A Param-hans Sanyasi should accept food from five households. He accepts food in the cupped-palms of his hand (and not in a food pot), and therefore he is also called a 'Karpatri'. [The word 'Kar' means hand, and 'Patra' means a pot. Hence, a man for whom his hands are the food-pot is called a Karpatri.]

A Turiyatit should accept food like a cow, i.e. he must eat whatever is available and directly with his mouth (without first collecting food in a pot and then using his fingers to eat—refer verse no. 16 and 38). He eats only fruits or things that do not need cooking, such as cereals and pulses which must be cooked before consumption.

An Avadhut Sanyasi can accept food from any household without distinguishing between them based on any kind of caste, creed or race. He accepts food like a python. [That is, he does not like to go out begging, but whatever is made available to him where he currently stays is acceptable to him.]

An Yati (an ascetic; a hermit; a wandering monk or friar) should not stay in a householder's place even for a single night. He should not bow before or offer prayers to show his humility to any person.

Between a Turiyatit and an Avadhut Sanyasi, no one is senior and no one is junior depending upon his age or his seniority according to the time he has spent as a Sanyasi. In fact, if a person is not aware of his actual truthful form, his true nature and his truthful 'self', if he has not become self-realised and enlightened, then even if he is senior in age or in the hierarchy of Sanyas he would still be deemed to be junior and premature as compared to a man who has achieved the exalted spiritual stature of 'realisation and enlightenment'.

A Sanyasi should never cross a river by swimming across it. [That is, he should take a ride on a boat instead.] He should also not climb trees. He should not take a ride on a vehicle. [That is, he must walk when going from place to place instead of accepting the easy way of riding a vehicle.]

He must not involve himself in any dealings or commerce or trade involving selling and purchasing anything. He must not barter anything, or exchange one for the other. [For instance, he must not exchange his water-pot or his over-garment with some other Sanyasi. This would be tantamount to trading.]

He must never be boastful, egoistic, arrogant, proud and haughty as well as deceitful, liar or an impostor.

He is not under any compulsion to do anything. The only thing that is expected of them and which they should be careful in doing is to do meditation and remain engrossed in deep thinking and contemplation (21).

आतुरकुटीचकयोर्भूर्लोकभुवर्लोकौ बहूदकस्य स्वर्गलोको हंसस्य तपोलोकः परमहंसस्य सत्यलोकस्तुरीयातीतावधूतयोः स्वात्मन्येव कैवल्यं स्वरूपानुसन्धानेन भ्रमरकीटन्यायवत् ॥२२॥

āturakuṭīcakayorbhūrloko bahūdakasya svargaloko haṁsasya tapolokaḥ  
paramahaṁsasya satyalokasturīyātītāvadhūtayoh svātmanyeva  
kaivalyaṁ svarūpānusandhānena bhramarakiṭanyāyavat // 22 //

22. [This verse describes the destination of various categories of Sanyasis.]

The Aatur and Kutichak Sanyasis attain Prithivi Loka and Bhuvaha Loka. [That is, they find their abode on this earth amongst living beings on earth, or in the lower heavens where junior Gods and Spirits live.]

The Bahudak Sanyasi finds his abode in the Swaha Loka. [That is, he goes to the upper heavens.]

The Hans Sanyasi attains the Tapa Loka. [This is the abode where those who do deep penances and austerities live.]

The Param-Hans Sanyasi goes to the Satya Loka. [This is the abode of the 'truth' or where the Supreme Being lives.]

The Turiyatit and Avadhut Sanyasis find their final destination in their own pure conscious 'self', which is the eternal Atma. This is called the 'Kaivalya'<sup>1</sup> destination as it symbolises the 'only one Truth that is eternal and universal'—'Kaivalya'—that exists in this creation. Just like a worm or insect (the Keet) that begins to think like a black bee (the Bhramar) and mentally becomes one like it because the black bee constantly buzzes over the former, leaving a profound psychological effect on the worm or the insect so much so that it loses its original

personality and becomes a de-facto black bee<sup>2</sup>, the Turiyatit and Avadhut Sanyasis too become soaked in the glory, the radiance, the magnificence and the divinity of their Atma which is immaculate and pure consciousness personified when they persistently and constantly meditate and contemplate upon it. They become indistinguishable from the nature and the subtle form of the Atma; they get coloured in the hue of the Atma. They lose awareness of everything external and superficial, and instead they reflect the glory, the divinity, the magnificence and the majesty of the Atma in its entirety. They become a glorified living personification of the eternal and divine Atma. [In fact, this is the highest state of self and truth realisation which teaches the spiritual aspirant that the only thing that is true, the only heaven that exists where he can ever expect to find eternal peace and bliss is no where in the distant sky known as the 'heaven' but well within his own bosom as his 'true self' known as the 'pure consciousness' or the Atma that resides in the subtle space of his own heart. If he does not realise this truth then all other heavens would never give him his eternal rest. In other words, one should endeavour to find peace within his own self rather than seek it in the outside world—this is the essence of this statement.] (22).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Kaivalya—refer Canto 3, verse no. 21, and Canto 7, verse no. 11.

The word *Kaivalya* means the 'only one' or the non-dual state. It is the supreme stature of existence which is the one of its kind and the most exalted state of existence when nothing but the non-dual consciousness is discernible everywhere in the world by the enlightened creature. There is non-duality and uniformity everywhere. It is a state of existence which is similar to the state of Samadhi in which the man goes about his daily life doing his chores in a routine way without getting emotionally involved in them and even remaining totally oblivious of what he is doing. He remains totally submerged in his inner self and thoughts. He appears in a virtual trance-like state of existence usually observed in realised ascetics and great philosophers. People regard such men as absent minded, but they are so much absorbed in themselves that they are not concerned with others think of them. For them, the external world ceases to exist though they physically live in it and interact with it. This Kaivalya form of existence is tantamount to having emancipation while a man still has a body, because in this state he is free from all worries, sufferings and sorrows as well as all forms of attachments, entanglements and involvements with the artificial and deluding world that are the usual features of a worldly man submerged in world's entrapping charm. This state is comparable to liberation of the soul upon death when it is physically liberated from the bondages of the limitations imposed by the gross body; the only difference being that in the former case the man is alive and enjoys the body, while in the latter case he sheds the burden of the body. The Kaivalya state is considered superior because such a man lives a life of happiness and contentedness; he never suffers from any worldly miseries and worries, he treats the world around him as of no consequence, and remains indifferent to its deluding effects and their entanglements. On the other hand, the ordinary man might find emancipation upon death, but his life is a burden while he is still alive in it. Such a man has not truly understood the teachings of the scriptures; he has not understood the spirit of spiritualism, for their main aim is to give peace and tranquility to the tormented soul and help in its liberation from the deluding effects of the body and the world. This concept has been elaborately described in *Muktiko-panishad* of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition. The concept has been described in many Upanishads, such as (i) Shukla Yajur Veda's *Muktiko-panishad*; *Subalo-panishad*, Canto 13, verse no. 1; *Mandal Brahmin Upanishad*, Brahman 2, section 3, verse no. 1. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda's *Sarva Saar Upanishad* and *Yogattava Upanishad*, verse nos. 12-17 ½ of Krishna Yajur Veda.

<sup>2</sup>The *black bee*—The metaphor of the *Bhramar* or the black bee and the *Keet* or the insect has been cited at a number of places in this Upanishad. Refer Canto 3, verse

no. 92, and Canto 5, verse no. 66. The instance of the Bhramar and the Keet has been used often in the Upanishads to indicate how constant remembrance of a thing transforms a man or any creature for that matter.

The Bhramar catches hold of a Keet and confines it to its hole. It then constantly buzzes over its captive Keet and a time is reached that the poor insect or worm forgets who it is due to the constant humming by the bee that has a profound psychological effect on the former. It loses its individuality and begins to think that it is also a bee. It becomes a de-facto bee for all practical purposes.

Likewise, a Sanyasi who constantly thinks of the supreme Brahm and remains mentally absorbed in this eclectic thought undergoes a personality change. This is accordance with the wisdom that a man becomes what he thinks and what company he keeps. As time passes, the ascetic forgets about everything else except the thoughts of Brahm. Since Brahm is the divine entity that is blissful and eternal, the ascetic too transforms into a living example of divinity that is blissful and eternal. Being freed from all worldly fetters that ordinarily tie down a man in strong shackles, he is deemed to be freed from all worldly bondages.]

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् । तं तमेव समाप्नोति नान्यथा श्रुतिशासनम् ॥२३॥

yaṃ yaṃ vāpi smaranbhāvaṃ tyajatyante kalevaram /  
taṃ tameva samāpnoti nānyathā śrutiśāsanam // 23 //

23. A person obtains a destiny, a destination and a new body according to what his thoughts were and what he had been wishing at the time of his death<sup>1</sup>. This is not mere hearsay but affirmed and endorsed by the scriptures (23).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The dependence of destiny of a man upon his thought texture and pattern at the time of death has been explained in other Upanishads as well. Refer— The concept of *death* and *what happens after that*, the *destiny* of the creature, has been succinctly described, inter alia, in the following Upanishads—

(a) Rig Veda = Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 1.

(b) Sam Veda = Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 5, Section 3-10.

(c) Shukla Yajur Veda = Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 3/1/3, 3/2/11-12, 3/9/28, 4/3/12, 4/3/33, 35-38, 4/4/1-14, 5/10-5/11, 6/1/1-6, 6/2/2, 14-16, etc.; Subalo-panishad, Canto 11.

(d) Krishna Yajur Veda = Taittiriyo-panishad, Valli 2, Anuvak 6; Katho-panishad, Canto 1, Valli 1, verse no. 20; Canto 1, Valli 2, verse no. 1-6; Canto 2, Valli 2, verse no. 6-8; Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 4-17; Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 3, verse no. 24.

(e) Atharva Veda = Prashna Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 9-10, 13-16; Canto 3, verse no. 7, 9-10; Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 3, section 1, verse no. 10; Mundak 3, section 2, verse nos. 1-2.]

तदेवं ज्ञात्वा स्वरूपानुसंधानं विनान्यथाचारपरो न भवेत्तदाचारवशात्तत्तल्लोकप्राप्तिर्ज्ञानवैराग्यसंपन्नस्य  
स्वस्मिन्नेव मुक्तिरिति न सर्वत्राचारप्रसक्तिस्तदाचारः । जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिष्वेकशरीरस्य जाग्रत्काले विश्वः  
स्वप्नकाले तैजसः सुषुप्तिकाले प्राज्ञः अवस्थाभेदादवस्थेश्वरभेदः कार्यभेदात्कारणभेदस्तासु  
चतुर्दशकरणानां बाह्यवृत्तयोऽन्तर्वृत्तयस्तेषामुपादानकारणम् । वृत्तयश्चत्वारः मनोबुद्धिरहंकारश्चित्तं चेति ।  
तत्तद्वृत्तिव्यापारभेदेन पृथगाचारभेदः ॥२४॥



tadevaṃ jñātvā svarūpānusandhānaṃ vinānyathācāraparo na  
bhavettadācāravaśāttattalokaṇprāptirjñānavairāgyasaṃpannasya  
svasminneva muktiriti na sarvatrācāraprasaktistadācāraḥ /  
jāgratsvapnasuṣupteṣvekaśarīrasya jāgratkāle viśvaḥ svapnakāle taijasaḥ  
suṣuptikāle prājñāḥ avasthābhedādavastheśvarabhedāḥ  
kāryabhedātkāraṇabhedastāsu caturdaśakāraṇānāṃ  
bāhyavṛttayo'tarvṛttayasteṣāṃpādānakāraṇam /  
vṛttayaścatvāraḥ manobuddhirahaṅkāraścittaṃ ceti /  
tattadvṛttivyāpārabhedena pṛthagācārabhedāḥ // 24 //

24. Hence, a truly wise, self-realised and enlightened Sanyasi should understand that it is expected of him to think of nothing else and involve himself in doing nothing other than contemplating upon his pure conscious Atma known as the 'self', which in turn is a microcosmic counterpart of the cosmic 'Self' that is known as the eternal transcendental Brahm. He should remain submerged in deeply thinking about it and striving to experience its true, real, eclectic and divine form, and spending his precious energy and time by meditating upon it. This is the only established code of conduct and precept prescribed for a Sanyasi. This is how he is expected to spend his time.

If one follows different precepts and schools of thoughts, it only diverts his attention from the main goal of Sanyas and leads the aspirant to different destinations in accordance to the path he follows and the codes of conduct he adopts. [This is clearly stated in verse no. 22-23 above which outline the different destinations for different categories of Sanyasis. It's like a situation when a fickle minded man who is uncertain of himself and the goal he has to achieve jumps from one subject to another, changes course too often, seeks as many opinions from as many advisors as he possibly can—leading to vexations, confusions and perplexities. This dithering and lack of confidence only adds to his dilemmas and frustrations instead of removing them. He becomes aimless and never reaches his destination. It's also like jumping boats midstream in the hope that the other boat is better and would take one to the other side more quickly. The result is that he sinks somewhere before reaching the goal.]

A Gyan-Vairagya Sanyasi, i.e. a spiritual aspirant in whom 'Gyan' or truthful knowledge, enlightenment and wisdom as well as 'Vairagya' or truthful and sincere renunciation, detachment and dispassion are the dominant factors, obtains Mukti or Moksha (i.e. spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation) by realising his 'true and real self'. He need not seek Mukti or Moksha anywhere outside, but he finds the eternal source of bliss, contentedness and peace within his own self as his pure conscious Atma which is a microcosmic form of the macrocosmic, all-pervading, supreme transcendental Consciousness that is the only Absolute Truth and Blissful Reality in creation. [And this 'truth' is called Brahm, and such a Sanyasi is therefore called both self-realised as well as Brahm-realised.]

Not to be involved in anything else other than contemplation and meditation upon the truthful 'self' or the pure conscious Atma, not to follow any other precept or doctrine except this, is the special feature of a truly enlightened and realised Sanyasi who has reached the highest pinnacle of Sanyas-hood.

He remains uniform and unchanging in all the three states of consciousness, viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, and the Sushupta or deep sleep state<sup>1</sup>. [That is, for him everything becomes irrelevant; he remains totally oblivious of his surroundings and even of his own gross body. Whether he is awake or

asleep, his demeanours and thought processes remain constantly focused on his ultimate goal of life which is to reach the 'truth' in the form of self and Brahm realisation and break free from the endless cycle of birth and death. So he is unconcerned with anything else like an innocent child who is not bothered about things that are causing so much agitation and restlessness to its parents, other family members and neighbours. The child never even knows the difference between happiness and misery that creates restlessness to its parents because for it everything is the same as long as its need for toys and food are satisfied. The child accepts new toys and the food that is offered to it, and then it forgets about its old toys and the earlier food that it had liked so much. The same situation is applicable to the Sanyasi—he never bothers about his past, but lives in the present; he does not know what causes so much misery and turmoil in the world as he remains ever contented and stable in his present condition. He lives in a perpetual state of Samadhi—which is like being in a trans-like state of unawareness of the surrounding world.]

The same eclectic divine entity called the pure consciousness which is the 'truthful self' of the aspirant is known as Vishwa during the Jagrat state, as Taijas during the Swapna state, and as Pragya during the Sushupta state<sup>2</sup>. Depending upon these three states of existence in which the consciousness lives at a particular moment, the same entity is given different names and exhibits different characteristics. Though the person is the same, he is known by different names and given different titles depending upon his different roles in life. [For instance, a man is a father for his son, a husband for his wife, a lord and master for his servant, a teacher for his student, a caring king for his subjects, and enemy for other kings, and so on and so forth.]

One can come to learn about the state of one's mind, thoughts and level of his spiritual existence by carefully examining the actions or deeds that are being done by him at any given moment. [For instance, if a man is mentally upset the way he handles any situation would be different as compared to his behaviour when his mind is composed. If a man gets mentally involved in the affairs of this material world and remains deeply involved in it, he is bound to be restless and in a state of constant flux. This would indicate his 'Vishwa' state of spiritual existence. On the other hand, if he physically remains involved in doing something, but does it merely in a mechanical manner while his mind is thinking of something else—as is the case with some students in a classroom who cannot concentrate on the subject taught in the class because though they might be physically present there but their mind is focused somewhere else—then it is the typical case of Taijas, the state of existence which is like a dream when a man does not live in the reality of the existing world, and instead lives in an imaginary world which has no relevance to the present. Finally, there is a state when a man is so focused on the job at hand that no external inputs or stimuli of the world can ever disturb or affect the composure of his mind and its ability to concentrate though he is very much awake and conscious of what he is doing, and not day-dreaming. This state of existence is called the Pragya state when pure wisdom, erudition, learning and enlightenment are the dominant factors, the key players.]

All the fourteen units (components; factors) of a creature's body that prevail upon the consciousness (Atma) that is inherently steady, composed, calm and uniform to make it outwardly extrovert, ever-changing, restless and active have only one primary instigator, and it is the creature's inherent 'Virtis'. This Vritti is a factor that determines his thoughts, behaviour and actions as well as the latent desires and wishes he has hidden inside his bosom. [The term 'Vritti' refer to a creature's basic tendencies, temperaments, inclinations and habits that are an integral part of his nature and personality. The fourteen units instruments referred to here are the following—5

organs of perception such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin + 5 organs of action such as hand, leg, mouth, excretory and reproductive + 4 Anthakarans = 14 units.]

It is said that there are four Vrittis inherent in a man—and they are Mana (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (sub-conscious) and Ahankar (ego, false sense of pride)<sup>3</sup>. One's behavioural and thought patterns are governed by the various permutations and combinations of these four factors (24).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer Canto 5, verse no. 1 and Canto 6, verse no. 4 also in this context.

<sup>2</sup>All these three terms are briefly described here. When a man is awake in the Jagrat state, he interacts with the physical gross world through his sense organs of perception and action, and the world is known as 'Vishwa'. When he is dreaming in the Swapna state, the physical world ceases to exist and the dynamism of the mind and its energy to visualise is transferred to his sub-conscious which creates a dynamic world of its own, called the world of dreams—this is 'Taijas'. Finally, when the man is fast asleep and even stops to dream in the state called Sushupta, all aspects of his mind are defunct, and in this state the only entity that remains is his true form called the Atma which is eternally enlightened and wise—hence he is called 'Pragya', the state of subtle consciousness that is marked by spiritual awakening and knowledge, the state when one's true form and nature come to the fore, though of course for a short while only. This state of 'knowing one's true self' is a completely blissful state of existence.

<sup>3</sup>Refer also to Canto 6, verse nos. 2-3 of the present Upanishad in this context. The *Shaarirak Upanishad* of the Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 4 describes these four components of the Anthakaran.]

नेत्रस्थं जागरितं विद्यात्कण्ठे स्वप्नं समाविशेत् । सुषुप्तं हृदयस्थं तु तुरीयं मूर्ध्नि संस्थितम् ॥२५॥

netrastham jāgaritaṁ vidyātkanṭhe svapnaṁ samāviśat /  
suṣuptaṁ hṛdayastham tu turīyaṁ mūrdhni samsthitaṁ // 25 //

25. The Jagrat or waking state of existence of consciousness, and its lord or ruler or governor called the Vishwa, is located in the eye. [This is because it is through the eye that a man sees this world; he becomes aware of the physical world because he can actually see it.]

The Swapna or dreaming state of existence of consciousness, and its lord or ruler or governor called the Taijas, is located in the throat. [This is because when a man is dreaming he cannot speak aloud using his mouth and tongue like he could do when he was awake, though he wishes to do so when interacting with other people during the dream. It is often observed that when a man sees a frightening dream or some very exciting dream, he would give out a guttural sound which appears like choked words. During a man's Jagrat state or waking state, he expresses his emotions and ideas aloud, but during the Swapna state or the dreaming state he cannot do so. Now, his expressions remains confined to his throat because the organ responsible for speaking aloud, i.e. the mouth and the tongue, are inactive while he sleeps. So, though his sub-conscious mind makes him express his views, it is not aloud but remains confined to the throat. This is manifested as guttural sound often emanating from a man who is lost in some restless dream while his physical body seems to be resting in deep sleep. Snoring is another manifestation of this phenomenon.]

The Sushupta or deep sleep state of existence of consciousness, and its lord or ruler or governor called the Pragya, is located in the heart. [This is because during

sound sleep the mind has become defunct along with the gross external body, and the only organ which shows activity that can be physically verified is the heart that continues to beat rhythmically. It is in the subtle space of the heart that the Atma lives. This Atma is glorious and divine; it is 'consciousness' personified. Since the word 'Pragya' means knowledge and awareness, it means that as long as the heart beats inside the body, the latter is regarded as 'alive' because the consciousness is still there inside the body. But as soon as the heart stops to beat, the body is 'dead' because the consciousness has abandoned its seat in the heart.]

The Turiya or the post-Sushupta transcendental state of existence of consciousness, and its lord or ruler or governor called the Parmatma, is located in the Brahm-randhra. [The Brahm-randhra is the hair like slit present on the top of the skull. It is described in the Upanishads that at the time of creation, the supreme Brahm had entered the body of the man through this slit and took up his seat in the head symbolising the higher echelons of intellect, erudition, knowledge, enlightenment and wisdom. An ascetic endeavours to concentrate his Pran or vital winds here by various Yoga techniques so that he can experience the eternal nectar of bliss and happiness that drips from this spot. An ascetic's final emancipation and deliverance or the Kaivalya Mukti is when his Pran and his Atma leave his gross physical body by escaping through this Brahm-randhra. The process to achieve this has been described elaborately in the Upanishads dealing with the concept of Yoga.] (25).

[Note—Refer Canto 6, verse no. 4 in the context of this verse.]

तुरीयमक्षरमिति ज्ञात्वा जागरिते सुषुप्त्यवस्थापन्न इव यद्यच्छ्रुतं यद्यद्दृष्टं तत्तत्सर्वमविज्ञातमिव यो वसेत्तस्य स्वप्नावस्थायामपि तादृगवस्था भवति । स जीवन्मुक्त इति वदन्ति । सर्वश्रुत्यर्थप्रतिपादनमपि तस्यैव मुक्तिरिति । भिक्षुर्नैहिकामुष्मिकापेक्षः । यद्यपेक्षास्ति तदनुरूपो भवति । स्वरूपानुसन्धानव्यतिरिक्तान्यशास्त्राभ्यासैरुष्ट्रकुङ्कुमभारवद्व्यर्थो न योगशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिर्न सांख्यशास्त्राभ्यासो न मन्त्रतन्त्रव्यापारः । इतरशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिर्यतेरस्ति चेच्छवालंकारवच्चर्मकारवदतिविदूरकर्माचारविद्यादूरो न प्रणवकीर्तनपरो यद्यत्कर्म करोति तत्तत्फलमनुभवति । एरण्डतैलफेनवदतः सर्वं परित्यज्य तत्प्रसक्तं मनोदण्डं करपात्रं दिगम्बरं दृष्ट्वा परिव्रजेद्भिक्षुः । बालोन्मत्तपिशाचवन्मरणं जीवितं वा न काङ्क्षेत कालमेव प्रतीक्षेत निर्देशभृतकन्यायेन परिव्राडिति ॥२६॥

turīyamakṣaramiti jñātvā jāgarite suṣṭyavasthāpanna  
iva yadyacchṛtaṃ yadyadrṣṭaṃ tatsatsarvamavijñātamiva  
yo vasettasya svapnāvasthāyāmapi tādr̥gavasthā bhavati /  
sa jīvanmukta iti vadanti / sarvaśrutyarthaṃpratiṇādanamapi tasyaiva  
muktiriti / bhikṣurnaihikāmuṣmikāpekṣaḥ / yadyapekṣāsti  
tadanurūpo bhavati /  
svarūpānusandhānavyatiriktānyaśāstrābhyāsairuṣṭrakuṅkumabhāravadvaryartha  
na yogaśāstrapravṛttirna sāṅkhyāśāstrābhyāso na mantratantravyāpāraḥ /  
itaraśāstrapravṛttiraterasti  
cecchavālāṅkāravaccarmakāravadatividūrakarmācāravidyādūro  
na praṇavakīrtanaparo yadyatkarma karoti tattatphalamanubhavati /  
eraṇḍatailaphenavadataḥ sarvaṃ parityajya tatprasaktaṃ manodaṇḍaṃ  
karapātraṃ digambaraṃ dr̥ṣṭvā parivrajedbhikṣuḥ /  
bālonmattapiśācavanmaraṇaṃ jīvitaṃ vā na kāṅkṣeta kālameva pratīkṣeta  
nirdeśabhṛtakanyāyena parivrāḍiti // 26 //

26. A wise, erudite and enlightened spiritual aspirant who has reached a permanent state of transcendental existence called the Turiya state when the only thing he is aware of is Brahm, and when his entire conscious existence revolves around this singular awareness, he is filled with the eclectic thought that 'the eternal, imperishable, supreme and transcendental essence of existence that prevails in the Turiya state is none other but me in my truthful form; it is me'. He realises that it is this supreme stature of existence of Brahm-realisation that really matters for him in any of the three states of Jagrat, Swapna or Sushupta in which he might be living in this world. [The word 'me' here refers to the pure consciousness known as the 'self'. This 'me' representing the 'consciousness' is the truthful identity of the creature.]

Having this eclectic awareness, he lives in a virtual state of Sushupta or deep sleep even while being physically wide awake in this world as during the Jagrat state of ordinary people. For him, whatever he sees and whatever he hears appear to be unknown, unseen and unheard by him. Even though he might be seeing and hearing something routinely on a daily basis, but his mind is asleep so much so that he remembers nothing and hence recollects nothing. [In other words, though he might have to attend to the chores of daily life and go out begging etc. for instance, he remains in a state of deep trance as if lost in some remote thoughts. He does things mechanically as and when they have to be done, but never allows his mind to stick to them even for a fleeting moment. With the mind de-linked from this world, he is literally asleep to the happenings around him; he remembers nothing and therefore his sub-conscious is free from the varied influences of the material world. He is not aware of either pain or comfort.]

When a man does not think about anything related to this material world, his mind does not store any memory of the latter, and sub-sequentially he would not dream of anything because dreams are based on the memory stored in one's sub-conscious mind about the world, along with a man's various desires and expectations from this world. Hence, such a man stays neutral and indifferent even in the second state of existence called Swapna or dreaming state; he never gets attracted or disturbed or influenced by anything that he sees in his dreams.

Such a person is indeed truly Jivan Mukta—i.e. he has found liberation and deliverance from all bondages and fetters even while he lives in this world. All the scriptures unanimously declare that he finds Mukti—i.e. spiritual liberation and deliverance.

A true renunciate monk is one who has no desire, hidden or apparent, of any kind, neither of anything pertaining to this world nor of anything related to the world hereafter. For, if he has any vestiges of desire of any kind left in him, he is bound to go to that place or take a re-birth in accordance to these desires. [Refer verse no. 23.]

Abandoning the search of the eternal Truth residing in his own bosom as his pure conscious 'self', and instead delving in voluminous scriptures in its search is as irrelevant an exercise as a camel on whose back saffron is loaded. [The camel does not know that the smell of saffron is coming from the load on its back because it is very light for him to take any notice. Instead of realising that the smell of the saffron is coming from its own load, the camel keeps on running thinking that the smell is coming from somewhere else. Similarly, an ignorant man does not know that the eternal Truth known as the Consciousness is a resident of his own bosom, and foolishly goes searching for it in the study of the scriptures.]

Such a self-realised ascetic should not have any further interest in the science of Yoga (meditation). [This is because the main purpose and aim of meditation is to help the ascetic realise the bliss of self-realisation and to enable him to obtain Mukti

by diverting his 'Pran Shakti' (i.e. the dynamic energy of the vital winds that his consciousness exhibits inside the body) towards the Brahm-randhra from where it finally escapes into the cosmic space outside the limited confines of the gross body. When this objective is achieved in the way narrated above, there is obviously no need for doing Yoga and its exercises such as Pranayam (breath control), Aasans and Mudras (body postures) and Bandhas (closure of apertures in the body).]

Likewise, it is not proper for him to practice the philosophy of Sankhya Shastra or the use of various systems of Mantras and Tantras (i.e. use of Mantras in achieving one's goal according to esoteric occult system of worship and spiritual practices).

In fact, if a Sanyasi has any interest in any of the scriptures or schools of philosophy and thought other than what is mentioned as the correct path for him in this Upanishad then it is like a dead body wearing ornaments. [He might gain knowledge by the study of scriptures and hearing discussions and discourses, but they are useless for him just like it is useless to decorate a corpse with costly jewellery.]

He ought to remain away not only from all other members of the society just like a cobbler but also keep a safe distance from all involvement with deeds, formalities and acquisition of fresh knowledge. [A cobbler usually lives away from a village or mainstream of the society as his vocation is considered to be lowly.]

He must abstain from chanting the Mantra OM aloud—because a man is bound to enjoy or suffer from everything that he does. [In the present context it means that when he chants OM loudly, people will treat him as a holy man and begin to gather around him, showering him with praises and material gifts. This would prevent him from remaining aloof from everyone and lead a lonely life of total renunciation and serenity. With company of one or the other sort he is bound to be sucked in the vortex of emotions, sentiments, relationships, formalities and other such worldly things that would invariably affect his mind and cause perplexity and mental restlessness. A true Sanyasi is not supposed to allow himself any company and praises.]

Hence, a true Sanyasi should discard all things and all people as being without any meaning and substance just like the foam or froth that forms on the surface of the castor oil has no value and it is removed from the surface by the user of the oil. [The foam or froth increases the external volume of the oil and makes it appear fresh and genuine, but it is only air bubble with no oil worth its name in it. Likewise, a wise Sanyasi treats the exuberant charms and boisterous presence of the world as of no real pith and substance.]

Instead, he must remain perpetually engrossed in the thoughts of the Supreme Being. He should observe the life and times of a Digambar (naked) Sanyasi for whom the control of the mind is the symbolic form of the ascetic's Danda (rod or staff), and the open palms of the hand are the symbolic Patra (pot) for accepting food, and treat him as his role model while he roams around carefree everywhere.

Remaining like a child, a lunatic or a possessed man, he should not desire either life or death. [That is, he is not bothered whether he lives or dies; whether anything that he does could cause him harm, or ponder about the options of whether he must do it or not. Refer also to verse nos. 50 and 53 of this Canto.]

Like an obedient servant he must behave and act patiently, remaining unperturbed about the result of actions or deeds that he should do as and when they are required to be done by him, and generally bidding for his time of emancipation and salvation (26).

तितिक्षाज्ञानवैराग्यशमादिगुणवर्जितः । भिक्षामात्रेण जीवी स्यात्स यतिर्यतिवृत्तिहा ॥२७॥

titikṣājñānavairāgyaśamādiguṇavarjitaḥ /  
bhikṣāmātreṇa jīvi syātsa yatiryativr̥ttihā // 27 //

27. A Sanyasi who manages to keep his gross body alive by subsisting on begged food without inculcating in himself such auspicious and noble virtues such as Titiksha (tolerance and forbearance), Gyan (truthful knowledge and enlightenment), Vairagya (renunciation, dispassion and detachment), as well as Sham and Dam (self-restraint of the sense organs as well as the mind)—verily, he is deemed to be a person who insults, demeans and causes harm to the auspiciousness, the dignity and the sanctity of the august institution of Sanyas. [Even an unfortunate pauper survives on charity and alms, but he has no spiritual standing, and is only living out a miserable and wretched life of hell while he is alive. Say, if a Sanyasi lives the same life, what difference would be there between him and the wretched pauper?] (27).

न दण्डधारणेन न मुण्डनेन न वेषेण न दम्भाचारेण मुक्तिः ॥२८॥

na daṇḍadhāraṇena na muṇḍanena na veṣeṇa  
na dambhācāreṇa muktiḥ // 28 //

28. Mukti or Moksha (liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation) are not attainable by mere external show of holiness and posing like a realised and pious man by sporting external signs of holding an ascetic's rod or staff, by tonsuring the head, by attiring in various costumes, or in any other external show-offs (28).

ज्ञानदण्डो धृतो येन एकदण्डी स उच्यते । काष्ठदण्डो धृतो येन सर्वाशी ज्ञानवर्जितः । स याति नरकान्धोरात्महारौरवसंज्ञितान् ॥२९॥

jñānadaṇḍo dhr̥to yena ekadaṇḍī sa ucyate /  
kāṣṭhadaṇḍo dhr̥to yena sarvāśī jñānavarjitaḥ /  
sa yāti narakāṅghorānmahārauravasamjñitān // 29 //

29. An 'Ekdandi' Sanyasi (i.e. one who holds on to only 'one' rod) is he who holds on to the eternally robust and sturdy staff represented by the virtue of having true knowledge and sincere enlightenment.

On the other hand, a so-called Sanyasi who holds a wooden staff but is devoid of knowledge and enlightenment, and whose mind and heart are full of various desires, yearnings and expectations, is an impostor who would go to the gravest of hells known as 'Maha Raurav Narka' (29).

प्रतिष्ठा सूकरीविष्ठासमा गीता महर्षिभिः । तस्मादेनां परित्यज्य कीटवत्पर्यट्टयतिः ॥३०॥

pratiṣṭhā sūkāriviṣṭhāsamā gītā maharṣibhiḥ /

tasmādenām parityajya kīṭavatparyāṭedyatiḥ // 30 //

30. Great sages and learned men have likened a Sanyasi's 'Pratistha' (worldly fame, grandeur, majesty, respect and honours that establish a man as highly renowned and acclaimed) to the stool of a female pig. [That is, Pratistha is to be abhorred by a Sanyasi at all costs because it is like the filthy faecal matter. Refer Canto 2, verse no. 40 also.]

Hence, a wise Sanyasi should neglect Pratistha, and wander here and there like free-flying insects and bondless worms which have no attachments to any particular place, and instead wander uninhibited, going to any place where they want, without any pre-planning. [Refer verse nos. 34 and 46 of this Canto 5.] (30).

अयाचितं यथालाभं भोजनाच्छादनं भवेत् । परेच्छया च दिग्वासाः स्नानं कुर्यात्परेच्छया ॥३१॥

ayācitam yathālābham bhojanācchādanam bhavet /  
parecchayā ca digvāsāḥ snānam kuryātparecchayā // 31 //

31. A true Digambar (naked) Sanyasi is one who would accept food that is voluntarily made available to him without his actually desiring it or asking for it. Similarly, he would cover his body with clothes that are made available to him without actually needing them or even desiring them. [It should be noted that the word 'Digambar' literally means one who wears the directions of the sky, the firmament, as his covering garment. For him, the sky is the cover as it wraps his body from all directions. The idea here is that he must be completely neutral, and mentally and emotionally detached from everything, liking none and loathing none. For a truly realised ascetic, it really does not matter whether he is physically naked or covered by reams of clothes. In fact, he is not even aware that he is 'naked' in the physical sense the word is understood to mean, because his 'self' is the Atma and it is already wearing the gross body with its covering of the skin as its garment or covering. So truly he is not at all naked.]

He has no wishes, aspirations or desires of his own. He wears clothes or covers his body with them if it so desired or wished by others, and he even takes a bath if it so desired or wished by others (31).

स्वप्नेऽपि यो हि युक्तः स्याज्जाग्रतीव विशेषतः । ईदृक्चेष्टः स्मृतः श्रेष्ठो वरिष्ठो ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥३२॥

svapne'pi yo yuktaḥ syājjāgratīva viśeṣataḥ /  
īdṛkceṣṭaḥ smṛtaḥ śreṣṭho variṣṭho brahmavādinām // 32 //

32. A Sanyasi who is as alert and vigilant to avoid sinful thoughts and deeds while he is dreaming as he would be in his waking state is deemed to be of a high stature amongst those who are expert in the eclectic knowledge pertaining to the supreme Brahm ('Brahm-Vaadin') (32).

अलाभे न विषादी स्याल्लाभे चैव न हर्षयेत् । प्राणयात्रिकमात्रः स्यान्मात्रासङ्गविवर्जितः ॥३३॥



alābhe na viṣādī syāllābhe caiva na harṣayet /  
prāṇayātrikamātraḥ syānmātrāsaṅgavivarjitaḥ // 33 //

33. He should have no regrets if he fails to get anything during begging to feed himself, nor should he exult at having got anything that is to his liking.

He should accept sufficient food that is enough to protect his life (and not to satisfy his taste buds or appease his appetite for food, and neither to hoarde for the next time) (33).

अभिपूजितलाभांश्च जुगुप्सेतैव सर्वशः । अभिपूजितलाभैस्तु यतिर्मुक्तोऽपि बध्यते ॥३४॥

abhipūjitalābhāṃśca jugupsetaiva sarvaśaḥ /  
abhipūjitalābhaistu yatirmukto'pi badhyate // 34 //

34. He ought to treat honours and respects with disdain and disgust. A Sanyasi who accepts honours and respects will be bound in fetters inspite of being free from all obligations of this world (34).

[Note—Refer verse no. 30 of this present Canto 5, and verse no. 20 of Canto 6.]

प्राणयात्रानिमित्तं च व्यङ्गारे भुक्तवज्जने । काले प्रशस्ते वर्णानां भिक्षार्थं पर्यटेद्गृहान् ॥३५॥

prāṇayātrānimittaṃ ca vyaṅgāre bhuktavajjane /  
kāle praśaste varṇānāṃ bhikṣārthaṃ paryaṭedgrhān // 35 //

35. A wise and learned Sanyasi should approach the house of a noble and upright householder to beg for food when the cooking is over and all the members of the household have had their meals. [Refer Canto 6, verse no. 10.]

The aim of begging for food should be to protect the Pran (life-forces in the body) during its journey in this world while it resides inside the body. [Refer verse no. 33 of the present Canto 5.] (35).

पाणिपात्रश्चरन्योगी नासकृद्भैक्षमाचरेत् । तिष्ठन्भुज्याच्चरन्भुज्यान्मध्येनाचमनं तथा ॥३६॥

pāṇipātraścaranyogī nāsakṛdbhaikṣamācaret /  
tiṣṭhanbhuñjyāccaranbhuñjyānmadhyenācamanaṃ tathā // 36 //

36. A Karpatri Sanyasi who uses the cupped palms of his hands as his only pot should accept food directly into it during his begging rounds, and he should not beg for food repeatedly. He must accept what is voluntarily given to him once, and eat it while still standing or as he continues to move ahead. He must not take (drink) any water while there is still some food in his hands. [Obviously this would be impractical as he is supposed to eat out of his cupped hands.] (36).

अब्धिवद्धतमर्यादा भवन्ति विशदाशयाः । नियतिं न विमुञ्चन्ति महान्तो भास्करा इव ॥३७॥

abdhivaddhṛtamaryādā bhavanti viśādāśayāḥ /  
niyatim na vimuñcanti mahānto bhāskarā eva // 37 //

37. A Sanyasi should be contained and self-regulated like the ocean. [The ocean is so vast and fathomless as well as powerful that should it so wish it can easily submerge the entire land mass in a blinking moment. But it never does so. The self-restraint of the ocean is best exemplified by its leaving the sand on its shores and beaches untouched. Can the sand ever stand against the might of the ocean should the latter decide to wash off the sand particles off its sides? An ordinary river washes away towns and villages when it is in spate, but the restrained ocean observes its self-imposed limits. Likewise, the Sanyasi is deemed to have acquired great spiritual and mystical powers that he can do whatever he likes to do, but he must always exercise the greatest of self-discipline.]

These exalted souls have broader mental horizons and higher spiritual aims in life than allowing themselves to be bogged down in such lowly affairs as exhibiting their spiritual and mystical powers to instil fear or get respect in this world.

Similarly, even though they are as brilliant and splendorous as the Sun shining in the sky, they still do not violate the codes of moral and spiritual conduct that behoves of a great soul who is known as a Sanyasi (37).

आस्येन तु यदाहारं गोवन्मृगयते मुनिः । तदा समः स्यात्सर्वेषु सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥३८॥

āsyena tu yadāhāraṁ govanmṛgayate muniḥ /  
tadā samaḥ syātsarveṣu so'mṛtatvāya kalpate // 38 //

38. When an ascetic begins to accept food directly in his mouth like a cow does, he develops great equanimity, tolerance and a sense of equality for all the creatures of this world. Such a man becomes eligible to obtain Mukti (liberation and deliverance) (38).

[Note—When the cow is hungry, she just opens her mouth and accepts whatever eatable is offered to her, without discriminating between the types of food as to its quality, taste, origin etc., as well as the person who feeds her, his gender, age, qualification, nature, caste, creed, ethnicity etc., whether the food is offered with due respect with the wisdom that it is being offered to another creature who represents the Lord or is a honoured guest of the householder or just as an excuse to get rid of leftovers in the house which no one wished to eat even later, and so many other considerations. The cow eats just to fill her stomach and sustain herself, and does not hoard food. It does not go out searching for tasty food offered from a particular house, but would gladly accept whatever comes her way.

The statement that 'the Sanyasi who eats like a cow stops differentiating between creatures of the world' is a metaphoric way of depicting his state of mind which has inculcated the grand spiritual quality of being neutral, dispassionate, calm, serene and contentedness, treating every situation alike with stoic indifference and a high degree of equanimity.

Refer verse no. 16 of the present Canto 5.]

अनिन्द्यं वै ब्रजेद्गेहं निन्द्यं गेहं तु वर्जयेत् । अनावृते विशेद्द्वारि गेहे नैवावृते ब्रजेत् ॥३९॥

anindyaṁ vai vrajangehaṁ nindyaṁ gehaṁ tu varjayet /

anāvṛte viśeddvāri gehe naivāvṛte vrajet // 39 //

39. During his rounds begging for food, he should go to a household which is free from any sinful influences and is not subject to public censor, criticism and reproach of any kind. He should avoid those households which are reproachable, sinful and under the influence of evil. [The general environment of the concerned household would be sufficient to give a wise and discriminating Sanyasi an idea whether it is worthy of accepting food from it or not. For instance, a household that is kept neat and clean, where auspicious signs such as some kind of religious symbol or mark is marked on the door or the external wall, where sound of prayers being said, hymns being sung, scriptures being read or pleasant words being said are generally audible instead of pop music, heated arguments or harsh words being exchanged, where sweet perfume of incense sticks that are usually used during worship and a sweet aroma of auspicious food that is offered to the deity wafts out in the surroundings instead of the smell of stale food or meat being cooked, where guests are welcome and not treated with disdain—and so many like things would be a sure indication for the Sanyasi whether or not to accept food from the house.]

He should enter a house whose gates or doors are open. He should never enter a house whose gates or doors are closed. [A house with open doors is indicative of its welcoming nature as well as the fact that its inhabitants have nothing to hide. A mendicant would be welcomed in such a household. On the contrary, closed doors mean that either there is no one inside, or it is not welcoming for the guest. A closed door indicates just the opposite.] (39).

पांसुना च प्रतिच्छन्नशून्यागारप्रतिश्रयः । वृक्षमूलनिकेतो वा त्यक्तसर्वप्रियाप्रियः ॥४०॥

pāṁsunā ca praticchannaśūnyāgārapratīśrayaḥ /  
vṛkṣamūlaniketo vā tyaktasarvapriyāpriyaḥ // 40 //

40. For the purpose of shelter, a Sanyasi should take refuge in such dwellings that are abandoned and covered by dust.

He should discard the notion of likes and dislikes in all matters (40).

यत्रास्तमितशायी स्यान्निरग्निरनिकेतनः । यथालब्धोपजीवी स्यान्मुनिर्दान्तो जितेन्द्रियः ॥४१॥

yatrāstamitaśāyī syānniragniraniketanaḥ /  
yathālabdhopajīvī syānmunirdānto jitendriyaḥ // 41 //

41. A Sanyasi should take rest from his wanderings at any place where he finds himself when the sun sets. He must not keep any fire (or inflammable material) with him, nor must he build any dwelling for himself.

He should sustain himself on whatever is available to him as a grace of God.

He should always keep his mind and sense organs under strict control (41).

निष्क्रम्य वनमास्थाय ज्ञानयज्ञो जितेन्द्रियः । कालकाङ्क्षी चरन्नेव ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥४२॥

niṣkrāmya vanamāsthāya jñānayaājño jitendriyaḥ /  
kālakāṅkṣī caranneva brahmabhūyāya kalpate // 42 //

42. A spiritual aspirant who leaves his house, takes shelter in a forest, keeps his mind and sense organs under control, embarks upon the exercise of acquiring enlightenment and true wisdom, and waits for the proper time for his final salvation while remaining constantly on the move—indeed, such an exalted Sanyasi is regarded as being eligible and competent enough to attain the eclectic state of Brahm-hood (42).

अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो दत्त्वा चरति यो मुनिः । न तस्य सर्वभूतेभ्यो भयमुत्पद्यते क्वचित् ॥४३॥

abhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo dattvā carati yo muniḥ /  
na tasya sarvabhūtebhyo bhayamutpadyate kvacit // 43 //

43. An exalted ascetic (Sanyasi) who roams around and blesses everyone with fearlessness would have nothing himself to fear from (43).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse no. 22.]

निर्मानश्चानहंकारो निर्द्वन्द्वश्छिन्नसंशयः । नैव क्रुध्यति न द्वेष्टि नानृतं भाषते गिरा ॥४४॥

nirmānaścānahāṅkāro nirdvandvaśchinnasaṁśayaḥ /  
naiva krudhyati na dveṣṭi nānṛtaṃ bhāṣate girā // 44 //

44. A Sanyasi who abandons such negative traits as ego, pride and vanity, who overcomes all confusions and perplexities that mire the mind of ordinary people, is able to free himself from all restlessness and confusions arising out of falsehoods and deceitful conduct.

He never shows anger towards anyone, nor does he harbour ill-will, malice or jealousy towards any person. He never speaks a lie or talks in a deceitful manner (44).

पुण्यायतनचारी च भूतानामविहिंसकः । काले प्राप्ते भवेद्भैक्षं कल्पते ब्रह्मभूयसे ॥४५॥

punṇyāyatanacārī ca bhūtānāmavihiṁsakaḥ /  
kāle prāpte bhavadbhaikṣaṃ kalpyate brahmabhūyase // 45 //

45. An exalted Sanyasi who keeps roaming in holy places that have an auspicious environment, who never harms any living creature, and who survives on food that is available by begging—indeed, only such a Sanyasi is competent and eligible to obtain the eclectic stature of Brahm-realisation (45).

वानप्रस्थगृहस्थाभ्यां न संसृज्येत कर्हिचित् । अज्ञातचर्यां लिप्सेत न चैनं हर्ष आविशेत् । अध्वा सूर्येण निर्दिष्टः कीटवद्विचरेन्महीम् ॥४६॥

vānaprasthagr̥hasthābhyāṃ na saṁsṛjyeta karhicit /  
ajñātacaryāṃ lipseta na cainaṃ harṣa āviśet /

adhvā sūryeṇa nirdiṣṭaḥ kīṭavadvicarenmahīm // 46 //

46. A wandering Sanyasi should never keep any contact with either the Grihastha or a Vaanprastha.

He must be careful that his life style is kept a secret and it is not revealed or divulged to other people.

He must never feel exulted or exhilarated at any development or circumstance.

Just like insects and worms continuously move from place to place, he must be constantly on the move on the path shown by the sun. [That is, he must move only during the day time, and rest during night. Refer verse nos. 30 and 41 also.] (46).

आशीर्युक्तानि कर्माणि हिंसायुक्तानि यानि च । लोकसंग्रहयुक्तानि नैव कुर्यान्न कारयेत् ॥४७॥

āśīryuktāni karmāṇi hiṃsāyuktāni yāni ca /  
lokasaṃgrahayuktāni naiva kuryānna kārayet // 47 //

47. A Parivrajak (Sanyasi) should not himself do anything related to fulfilment of desires, harming others in any way, or accumulation of material things of this world, and neither should he motivate or inspire or teach others to do so (47).

नासच्छास्त्रेषु सज्जेत नोपजीवेत जीविकाम् । अतिवादांस्त्यजेत्तर्कान्पक्षं कंचन नाश्रयेत् ॥४८॥

nāsacchātreṣu sajjeta nopajīveta jīvikām /  
ativādāṃstyajettarkānpakṣaṃ kañcana nāśrayet // 48 //

48. He should never be interested in false scriptures.

He must never involve himself in doing any deeds that help him in generating his livelihood or to sustain himself, for he is expected to beg for the same. [Getting involved in any sort of vocation as a means of livelihood would make him mentally involved in it and its results or consequences, and then what would be the difference between a Sanyasi and a householder who remains engrossed in worldly activities? It would be better if he had not taken the vows of Sanyas in the first place if he attempts to engage in any sort of vocational activity.]

He must not talk without necessity, and abstain from entering into arguments, discussions and debates. He must remain exemplarily neutral, not taking sides with anyone, either those who are in the favour of the subject of discussion or those who are against the motion. [This restriction is of practical value for a Sanyasi, for if he takes side with any one party he is bound to offend the other. This would generate bad blood and create unnecessary and unavoidable problems for him.] (48).

न शिष्याननुबध्नीत ग्रन्थान्नैवाभ्यसेद्बहून् । न व्याख्यामुपयुञ्जीत नारम्भानारभेत्क्वचित् ॥४९॥

na śiṣyānanubadhnīta granthānnaivābhyasedbahūn /  
na vyākhyāmupayuñjīta nārambhānārabhetkvacit // 49 //

49. A Sanyasi must not gather disciples around him (because this would be tantamount to keeping a household, albeit in the form of a hermitage full of obedient disciples or a fluid population of extended members of the family in the form of followers.)

He must not read or study many scriptures (as this is a waste of his time and energy, besides being impractical for him as he is expected to be always on the move).

He should avoid entering into debates and proving his point by arguments and logics to express what is in his mind. These create vexations and restlessness for the Spirit.

He must not attempt to spread his name and fame by holding various religious festivals and ceremonies (49).

अव्यक्तलिङ्गोऽव्यक्तार्थो मुनिरुन्मत्तबालवत् । कविर्मूकवदात्मानं तद्दृष्ट्या दर्शयेन्नृणाम् ॥५०॥

avyaktaliṅgo'vyaktārtho munirunmattabālavat /  
kavirmūkavadātmānaṁ taddr̥ṣṭyā darśayennr̥ṇām // 50 //

50. A wise Sanyasi should not sport any sign indicative of the Ashram to which he belongs. [That is, he should not exhibit any external signs to show off his high spiritual stature or to indicate what type of Sanyasi he is. He should also not wear any signs that would indicate who he was prior to accepting the vows of Sanyas, or what social stature he had occupied. No one should be able to tell anything about him, and he is expected to remain completely anonymous. Refer also to Canto 6, verse no. 17.]

He should behave foolishly and stupidly like an ignorant child or a mad man in front of others. In spite of being very wise, erudite, learned and enlightened, he must remain silent as if he is dumb and dud while dealing with other people. [This attitude helps him to avoid company and maintain his serenity and peace of mind. Refer verse nos. 26 and 53 of the present Canto 5.]

He must assume a countenance and act in accordance with the ways of the people with whom he has to interact at a particular moment. [That is, he must adapt himself to circumstances in which he finds himself at a given moment of his life, but this is to be a temporary phase and as soon as the circumstances change he must revert back to his original self. This quick adaptation helps him to avoid curiosity about himself amongst the local populace, besides making him easily acceptable by them. This makes his life easier and trouble free. It's a practical advice.] (50).

न कुर्यान्न वदेत्किञ्चिन्न ध्यायेत्साध्वसाधु वा । आत्मारामोऽनया वृत्त्या विचरेज्जडवन्मुनिः ॥५१॥

na kuryāna vadetkiñcinna dhyāyetsādhvasādhū vā /  
ātmārāmo'nayā vṛṭṭyā vicarejjadavanmuniḥ // 51 //

51. A Sanyasi must not let either any good or any bad thoughts to enter his mind.

He must wander silently without speaking, and not get involved in any deed whatsoever. He must remain submerged in the thoughts of his Atma, which is his true self and pure consciousness. Being thus lost in his own thoughts, he ought to roam

silently and calmly like a man in a trance. He must keep his sense organs under strict control (51).

एकश्चरेन्महीमेतां निःसङ्गः संयतेन्द्रियः । आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिरात्मवान्समदर्शनः ॥५२॥

ekaścarenmahīmetāṃ niḥsaṅgaḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ /  
ātmakrīḍa ātmaratirātmavānsamadārśanaḥ // 52 //

52. A Sanyasi must abandon all the Vasanas (worldly desires and passions) and roam in this world alone, without keeping any company.

He must treat everyone alike and with great equality. [That is, he must not distinguish between any two creatures. He must not show preference for one who speaks sweetly to him and dislike another person who shows disrespect to him.] (52).

बुधो बालकवत्क्रीडेत्कुशलो जडवच्चरेत् । वदेदुन्मत्तवद्विद्वान् गोचर्या नैगमश्चरेत् ॥५३॥

budho bālakavatkrīḍetkuśalo jaḍavaccaret /  
vadedunmattavadvidvān gocaryāṃ naigamaścaret // 53 //

53. He must behave like a child. In spite of being an expert in everything, in spite of being wise and enlightened, he should act stupidly and ignorantly. [Refer verse no. 50 of the present Canto 5, as well as verse no. 34 of Canto 3, and verse no. 21 of Canto 4 also in this context.]

In spite of having full knowledge of all the Vedas, he must keep silent and humble like a cow.

In spite of being highly erudite and learned, he must always talk impertinently and irrelevantly like a stupid and ignorant man, or one who is possessed by evil spirits (53).

क्षिप्तोऽवमानितोऽसद्भिः प्रलब्धोऽसूयितोऽपि वा । ताडितः संनिरुद्धो वा वृत्त्या वा परितापितः ॥५४॥

kṣipto'vamānito'sadbhiḥ pralabdho'sūyito'pi vā /  
tāḍitaḥ saṁniruddho vā vṛttyā vā parihāpitaḥ // 54 //

54. A Sanyasi should bear with exemplary fortitude, courage and equanimity, maintaining his calm and poise in the face of all sorts of insults, false accusations, insinuations and other such attacks on his character by those who are wicked and evil.

Even if such wicked and sinful persons torment him physically, tie him in shackles, or cause hindrance in his routine life and its chores, then also he must remain calm and unruffled, neglecting their instigations and rudness. [Eventually they would relent and let him go his way. Refer verse no. 55 below.] (54).

विष्टितो मूत्रितो वाज्रैर्बहुधैवं प्रकल्पितः । श्रेयस्कामः कृच्छ्रगत आत्मनात्मानमुद्धरेत् ॥५५॥

viṣṭhito mūtrito vājñairbahudhaivaṃ prakalpitaḥ /

śreyaskāmaḥ kṛcchragata ātmanātmānamuddharet // 55 //

55. A Sanyasi must tolerate with stoic calmness the ignominy inflicted upon him by wicked and sinful persons who might spit upon him, defecate or urinate upon him, or torment him in any other way.

When faced with adversities, he must endeavour calmly to extricate himself from this situation without offending the tormentor, and as soon as possible. [For instance, when the tormentor is fed up with him, he would release him, and then instead of fighting back, seeking revenge or hurling abuses and curses at his tormentor a Sanyasi should walk away calmly from the site. This would have such a profound psychological effect on his tormentor that he would be buried in the sense of guilt and shame. Refer verse no. 54 above.] (55).

संमाननं परां हानिं योगद्धैः कुरुते यतः । जनेनावमतो योगी योगसिद्धिं च विन्दति ॥५६॥

saṁmānanam parāṁ hāniṁ yogarddheḥ kurute yataḥ /  
janenāvamato yogī yogasiddhiṁ ca vindati // 56 //

56. Honours and respects that one gets from others cause hindrance in one's spiritual progress and undermines the good effects of doing Tapa (observation of austerities and penances). [Refer Canto 6, verse no. 20.]

On the other hand, insults and torments inflicted upon a Sanyasi by others, if he bears them with stoic calmness and equanimity of behaviour, would only go to enhance the good effects of Tapa done by him and helps in his early success. [Refer verse nos. 54-55 of this Canto 5.] (56).

तथा चरेत वै योगी सतां धर्ममदूषयन् । जना यथावमन्येरन्गच्छेयुर्नैव सङ्गतिम् ॥५७॥

tathā careta vai yogī satāṁ dharmamadūṣayan /  
janā yathāvamanyerangaccheyurnaiva saṅgatim // 57 //

57. An excellent ascetic or Sanyasi is one who does not cause any kind of hindrance in or obstructs the religious observances of other people. He never criticises them or their religious beliefs. He must prefer, on the other hand, that people would criticise him and avoid his contact (57).

[Note—Refer verse nos. 44, 53-56 and 58 of the present Canto 5 in this context.]

जरायुजाण्डजादीनां वाङ्मनःकायकर्मभिः । युक्तः कुर्वीत न द्रोहं सर्वसङ्गांश्च वर्जयेत् ॥५८॥

jarāyujāṇḍajādīnāṁ vāṇmanaḥkāyakarmabhiḥ /  
yuktaḥ kurvīta na drohaṁ sarvasaṅgāṁśca varjayet // 58 //

58. A Sanyasi must pursue the auspicious path of Yoga (meditation and contemplation) and have no ill-will or animosity with any creature, whether it is a Jaraauj (one who develops in the mother's womb) or an Andaj (one who develops outside the mother's womb in an egg).



He must not harbour any malice towards them. His actions or deeds, his mind and its thoughts, his faculty of speech or the words spoken by him, or his physical body and its organs should never be used to harm them or create ill-will towards them.

He must avoid all types of attachments and relationships of whatever kind (58).

कामक्रोधौ तथा दर्पलोभमोहादयश्च ये । तांस्तु दोषान्परित्यज्य परिव्राड् भयवर्जितः ॥५९॥

kāmakrodhau tathā darpalobhamohādayaśca ye /  
tāmstu doṣānparityajya parivrāḍ bhayavarjitaḥ // 59 //

59. A Sanyasi should abandon all negative traits such as Kaam (worldly passions), Krodh (anger), Mada (arrogance and haughtiness), Lobh (greed) and Moha (attachments and affections) and thereby become fearless (59).

भैक्षाशनं च मौनित्वं तपो ध्यानं विशेषतः । सम्यग्ज्ञानं च वैराग्यं धर्मोऽयं भिक्षुके मतः ॥६०॥

bhaikṣāśanaṁ ca maunitvaṁ tapo dhyānaṁ viśeṣataḥ /  
samyagjñānaṁ ca vairāgyaṁ dharmo'yaṁ bhikṣuke mataḥ // 60 //

60. [Verse nos. 60-66 reiterates some of the vows that a Sanyasi or a Parivrajak takes. These verses sort of summarise what have been said till now.]

The Dharma or the auspicious, righteous and sanctioned way of conduct for a Bhikshuk or a monk or ascetic who subsists on begging are the following—to accept food got only by begging, to observe the vows of silence, to remain constantly engrossed or involved in doing Tapa (austerity, penance and sufferance of hardships for some noble cause), to remain absorbed in researching the ‘truth’ and acquisition of truthful knowledge that is auspicious, righteous, divine, spiritually uplifting and generally conducive to one’s spiritual liberation and deliverance, and to have profound sense of renunciation, detachment and dispassion (60).

काषायवासाः सततं ध्यानयोगपरायणः । ग्रामान्ते वृक्षमूले वा वसेद्देवालयेऽपि वा । भैक्षेण वर्तयेन्नित्यं नैकान्नाशी भवेत्क्वचित् ॥६१॥

kāṣāyavāsāḥ satataṁ dhyānayogaparāyaṇaḥ /  
grāmānte vṛkṣamūle vā vaseddevālaye'pi vā /  
bhaikṣeṇa vartayennityaṁ naikānnāśī bhavetkvacit // 61 //

61. An ascetic should wear ochre clothes and perpetually remain absorbed in meditation and contemplation called ‘Dhyān Yoga’.

For shelter, he should stay outside a village (i.e. any populated areas) under the shade of a tree near its roots, or in some shrine dedicated to some God.

He should sustain himself by begging for food on a daily basis. [That is, he is not supposed to store food for the next day.]

He must never accept food from the same household twice, or on two occasions (61).

चित्तशुद्धिर्भवेद्यावत्तावन्नित्यं चरेत्सुधीः । ततः प्रव्रज्य शुद्धात्मा संचरेद्यत्र कुत्रचित् ॥६२॥

cittaśuddhirbhavedyāvattāvannityaṃ caretsudhīḥ /  
tataḥ pravrajya śuddhātmā saṁcaredyatra kutracit // 62 //

62. A wise and learned man should lead a self-regulated life and diligently observe all the tenets and codes of conduct that are prescribed by the scriptures and tradition for the way of life he has chosen to lead, which in this case is the life of a Sanyasi. His behaviour and demeanours should be excellent and exemplary, and it should be a daily and natural routine for him. He must continue to live auspiciously and righteously till the time his inner-self does not become completely cleansed and washed of all impurities, imperfections and taints that usually shroud a man and distort his inherently immaculate nature.

When the aspirant has successfully cleaned his inner-self of all impurities and imperfections by observing austerities and penances, he can now move around wherever he wishes without any fear. [Unless the inner-self is totally rid of all worldly corruptions and imperfections, there are good chances that he, as a human being, might fall prey to various temptations. So, this stage of rigorous observance of codes of conduct helps to build up self confidence in him and prepares him to resist the gravest of provocations and the profoundest of temptations in his life as a Sanyasi.] (62).

बहिरन्तश्च सर्वत्र संपश्यन्हि जनार्दनम् । सर्वत्र विचरेन्मौनी वायुवद्वीतकल्मषः ॥६३॥

bahirantaśca sarvatra saṁpaśyanhi janārdanam /  
sarvatra vicarenmaunī vāyuvadvītakalmaṣaḥ // 63 //

63. A wise Sanyasi should keep his sight focused on the supreme Lord called 'Janardan' (literally the Lord who is merciful, gracious, benevolent and beneficent towards his devotees or subjects; a reference to Lord Vishnu); he should see this Lord both in the external world as well as inside his own bosom. [That is, a true Sanyasi is one who has reached the stage of realisation when he sees the same Lord everywhere—because he has become enlightened enough to realise the non-dual nature of the Supreme Being. He realises, inter alia, that the same Lord resides in all the aspects of creation, whether it is the world outside seen with the physical eyes of the body, or it is the world of the inner-self seen with the inner eyes of wisdom and spiritual enlightenment.]

He roams around detached, unconcerned and untainted by sins like the wind or the air element that comes in contact with everything that exists on this earth, but remains unaffected or un-influenced by any of them (63).

समदुःखसुखः क्षान्तो हस्तप्राप्तं च भक्षयेत् । निर्वैरेण समं पश्यन्दिजगोऽश्वमृगादिषु ॥६४॥

samaduḥkhasukhaḥ kṣānto hastaprāptam ca bhakṣayet /  
nirvairēṇa samam paśyandvijago'svamṛgādiṣu // 64 //

64. A Sanyasi ought to maintain stoic neutrality and exemplary calmness and mental poise in the face of opposing situations or circumstances, such as when faced with sorrows, grief, misfortunes and distress, or during moments of happiness, pleasures and good fortunes.

He must be ever forgiving and tolerant.

He should accept whatever food that voluntarily comes in his hands. [That is, he should not demand this and that to eat.]

He must not have malice, ill-will or animosity with anyone, and treat a Brahmin, a cow, a horse and a deer alike. [That is, he must treat all living beings equally, not distinguishing between them on any criterions.] (64).

भावयन्मनसा विष्णुं परमात्मानमीश्वरम् । चिन्मयं परमानन्दं ब्रह्मैवाहमिति स्मरन् ॥६५॥

bhāvayanmanasā viṣṇum paramātmānamīśvaram /  
cinmayam paramānandam brahmaivāhamiti smaran // 65 //

65. A Sanyasi must have the holistic and eclectic thinking that all the creatures are personifications of one Supreme Being who is all-pervading and the supreme Father of creation. He must be convinced, as a consequence, that he himself is a personification of the supreme Brahm who is an eternal fount of bliss, beatitude and felicity (65).

ज्ञात्वैवं मनोदण्डं धृत्वा आशानिवृत्तो भूत्वा आशाम्बरधरो भूत्वा सर्वदा मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः  
सर्वसंसारमुत्सृज्य प्रपञ्चावाङ्मुखः स्वरूपानुसन्धानेन भ्रमरकीटन्यायेन मुक्ता भवतीत्युपनिषत् ॥६६॥

jñātvaiyam manodaṇḍam dhṛtvā āśānivr̥tto bhūtvā āśāmaradharo  
bhūtvā sarvadā manovākkāyakarmabhiḥ sarvasaṃsāramutsr̥jya  
prapañcāvāṇmukhaḥ svarūpānusandhānena bhramarakīṭanyāyena  
mukto bhavatītyupaniṣat // 66 //

66. A wise and enlightened Sanyasi who has developed these auspicious thoughts in his mind holds on to them like an ascetic holds on to his physical Danda or staff. [The ascetic's rod is a symbol of his moral authority, and constantly reminds him of his special status that prevents him from going astray from the path of Sanyas-hood. A steady mind assumes the same role, and it stands the ascetic in good stead.]

Such an enlightened view point makes the Sanyasi free from all desires, aspirations, hopes and expectations. He is filled with profound renunciation so much so that he discards all clothes that cover him.

He discards the world completely and renounces all his links with it through all the instruments of his body that usually help one to maintain this link—viz. the Mana (mind), the Vachan (speech), the Karma (deeds) and the Sharir (the physical body). [He never thinks about the world by controlling his Mana, he never speaks or hears about the world by controlling his Vaani and Vachan, he never does anything gross in nature by abstaining from Karma, and he never establishes any physical

contact with any material thing of a gross nature in this world by controlling his physical body, the Sharir.]

He turns his face against all worldly affairs leading to confusions and perplexities, all sorts of worldly deceit and corruptions that have their genesis in Maya (i.e. in delusions and deceptions).

Instead, he follows the principle of 'Bhramar and Keet'<sup>1</sup> to remain ever engrossed in the thoughts of Brahm, to remain absorbed in doing meditation and contemplation on this Brahm to finally find Mukti or liberation and deliverance for his soul (66).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Bhramar and Keet—Refer note no. 2 of verse no. 22 of the present Canto 5.]

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### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 6

[This Canto describes the fourth state of existence called the Turiya state of consciousness in which the Sanyasi lives perpetually, along with narrating the daily life of an enlightened Sanyasi or a Parivrajak. This Canto brilliantly describes the different components of the body, their utility and function for the creature, the various states in which the consciousness exists in the body, and other related matters.]

॥ षष्ठोपदेशः ॥

अथ नारदः पितामहमुवाच । भगवन् तदभ्यासवशात् भ्रमरकीटन्यायवत्तदभ्यासः कथमिति । तमाह पितामहः । सत्यवाग्ज्ञानवैराग्याभ्यां विशिष्टदेहावशिष्टो वसेत् ॥१॥

atha nāradaḥ pitāmahamuvāca /  
bhagavan tadabhyāsavaśāt bhramakīṭanyāyavattadabhyāsaḥ kathamiti /  
tamāha pitāmahaḥ /  
satyavāgjnānavairāgyābhyāṃ viśiṣṭadehāvaśiṣṭo vaset // 1 //

1. Once again, sage Narad asked the great grandfather of creation, Brahma—‘Oh Lord! You have just said that the ascetic attains Mukti when he successfully replicates the principle of Bhramar and Keet in his personal life. [See verse no. 66 of Canto 5 above.] But now please tell me how to actually practice this principle so that one can attain the highest spiritual stature.’

Brahma elaborated—‘Oh Narad! One must accept only the ‘truth’ in life and discard all falsehoods and pretensions. He must take the help of the virtues of Gyan and Vairagya (truthful knowledge and sincere renunciation respectively) to overcome all affections and attachments for this body which is gross, perishable, impure and mortal, and instead become established in that excellent body which is subtle, imperishable, eternal and immaculate. [The former body is the physical body consisting of the sense organs and build up of bones, marrow, skin, blood, mucous,

nerves and veins, urine and stools etc. Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 46, 48; and Canto 4, verse nos. 25, 27. The latter body is the subtle body that harbours the mind and intellect as well as the causal body that harbours the pure conscious Atma.] (1).

ज्ञानं शरीरं वैराग्यं जीवनं विद्धि शान्तिदान्ती नेत्रे मनो मुखं बुद्धिः कला पञ्चविंशतितत्त्वान्यवयवा  
अवस्था पञ्चमहाभूतानि कर्म भक्तिज्ञानवैराग्यं शाखा जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिचतुर्गुणतुर्दशकरणानि  
पङ्कस्तम्भाकाराणीति । एवमपि नावमतिपङ्कङ्कर्णधार इव यन्तेव गजं स्वबुद्ध्या वशीकृत्य स्वव्यतिरिक्तं  
सर्वं कृतकं नश्वरमिति मत्वा विरक्तः पुरुषः सर्वदा ब्रह्माहमिति व्यवहरेन्नान्यत्किञ्चिद्वेदितव्यं  
स्वव्यतिरेकेण । जीवन्मुक्तो वसेत्कृतकृत्यो भवति । न नाहं ब्रह्मेति व्यवहरेत्किन्तु ब्रह्माहमस्मीत्यजस्रं  
जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु । तुरीयावस्थां प्राप्य तुरीयातीतत्वं व्रजेत् ॥२॥

jñānaṃ śarīraṃ vairāgyaṃ jīvanaṃ viddhi śāntidāntī netre  
mano mukhaṃ buddhiḥ kalā pañcaviṃśatitattvānyavayava  
avasthā pañcamahābhūtāni karma bhaktijñānavairāgyaṃ śākhā  
jāgratsvapnasuṣuptiturīyāścaturdaśakaraṇāni pañkastambhākārāṇi /  
evamapi nāvamati pañcakarṇadhāra iva yanteva gajaṃ svabuddhyā  
vaśīkṛtya svavyatiriktaṃ sarvaṃ kṛtaṃ naśvaramiti matvā viraktaḥ  
puruṣaḥ sarvadā brahmāhamiti vyavaharennānyatkiñcidveditavyaṃ  
svavyatirekeṇa / jīvanmukto vasetkṛtakṛtyo bhavati /  
na nāhaṃ brahmeti vyavaharetkintu brahmāhamasmītyajasraṃ  
jāgratsvapnasuṣuptiṣu / turīyāvasthāṃ prāpya turīyātītatvaṃ vrajet // 2 //

2. [This verse describes in a symbolic manner the various parts of the subtle body of a creature.]

The aspect of the body that remains after its gross components are eliminated is called the subtle body, and it is represented by Gyan (i.e. mind and intellect, because these are the instruments by which a man acquires Gyan or knowledge to become wise, learned and enlightened).

Vairagya (renunciation) is the soul of this body. [True knowledge instils renunciation in a man for he has now realised the deluding, transient, entrapping and artificial nature of this material world and its equally illusive charms. He begins to distance himself from it because he had become disillusioned by it. If true Gyan or enlightenment, wisdom and learning cannot inspire Vairagya, or true renunciation and detachment in a man, then he cannot be said to have acquired true Gyan. If he says that he has this virtue of Gyan in him, he is only deceiving himself and others.]

Sham and Dam (self restraint of the mind and body) are its two symbolic eyes. [That is, a wise man sees everything with restraint and with self control of natural urges.]

Its symbolic mouth is a completely cleansed Mana (mind). [A creature accepts things to eat by its mouth, and this food helps to nourish the rest of the body. In the present context, a wise and discriminating mind would accept only noble thoughts and ideas, and exclude everything that is unworthy to be accepted, that is ignoble, unholy, lowly and avoidable. This input would obviously have an all-round positive effect on the creature's well being and overall personality. Positive thoughts are always beneficial because they create positive energy fields. A system nourished by things positively charged would naturally be superior and better placed than those that are sustained by evil and negatively charged energy. Similarly, a creature speaks by its

mouth; the mouth is the ‘spokesman of the inner thoughts of the creature’. When the mind is holy and cleansed of all impurities, its thoughts would also be concurrently holy and pure. This would be reflected by what a man says, what he thinks, what he does, and how he behaves.]

The Buddhi or intellect is its special Kalaa or exclusive quality or virtue that distinguishes it from others. [Like the case of a man having great practical intelligence, natural wisdom and prudence inspite of him being not formally educated, or even when he is learned in the letters his literal knowledge would be useless unless he is endowed with the gift of prudence, intelligence and wisdom, the subtle body that has a sharp Buddhi (intellect) along with the Mana (mind) that is fine-tuned and wise is indeed distinguished and set apart from others.]

This subtle body has twenty-five components or parts or organs called the Tattwas (elements), and they are the following—the five perceptions (of smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch), the five faculties of action (accepting, going, speaking, sensual or sexual awareness and the desire to excrete or eliminate waste), the five Prans (i.e. the vital winds or airs that sustain life inside the body—Pran or breath, Apaana, Samaana, Vyaana and Udaana), the five objects of perception (things seen, things heard, things smelt, things tasted and things felt), the four Antahakarans (i.e. the four aspects of the inner self which are Mana or mind, Buddhi or intellect, Chitta or sub-conscious, and Ahankar or ego), and one un-manifest Prakriti (or the latent, hidden but inherent nature and temperament of a creature). [Refer also to Mahopanishad, 1/4 – 69 of Sam Veda tradition.]

The overall gross body of a creature consisting of the five Maha Bhuts (elements such as sky, air, fire, water and earth) has five states of existence—viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Sushupta or deep sleep state, the Turiya or post Sushupta state that is bordering on the transcendental and deep sleep state, and Turiyatit or post Turiya state of permanent transcendental existence.

The four symbolic limbs of the body are the following—Karma or deeds done, Bhakti or devotion for one’s noble aim in life as well as submission to the Lord, Gyan or truthful knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment, and Vairagya or renunciation, detachment, dispassion and indifference towards all material things and falsehoods of the world.

Another interpretation is that the four states of existence of consciousness, viz. the Jagrat, the Swapna, the Sushupta and Turiya are the four symbolic limbs of the body.

The fourteen organs or instruments of the body (refer verse no. 3 of this Canto 6) by which the creature perceives the external world in which it lives are the following—one Mana or the faculty of the mind, one Buddhi or the faculty of the intellect, one Chitta or the faculty of the memory, the sub-conscious mind, and the power to focus and fix attention, one Ahankar or the sense of pride in the body and its achievements as well as its stupendous abilities (which enables the gross body to become agile and active to prove that it is strong, able, competent, energetic and muscular enough to achieve tough and the most daunting of tasks), five organs of perceptions such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin, and the five organs of action such as the hand, leg, mouth, excretory and reproductive. These organs or instruments are like the pillars that support the creature’s existence in this world. It is with the aid of these fourteen components or parts the edifice of the world is accepted and known by the living being.

In this prevailing situation, a wise ascetic is he who acts like an expert boatman who can extricate the boat that has been trapped in a swamp and manoeuvre

it to safety. In other words, a wise ascetic should overcome all spiritual obstacles and expertly take the boat representing his life across this endless world of delusions, entrapments, miseries and temptations, a world which is like an ocean, and reach the other shore symbolising emancipation and salvation for his soul. He must act like an expert elephant tamer who can control even a rogue elephant with dexterity, and force it to go along the desired path.

Hence, a wise and enlightened man who is well established in Gyan (or truthful knowledge of the reality of existence) must be convinced that whatever that exists besides his pure consciousness called the Atma is deluding, false and deceptive, and therefore he exclaims 'Aham Brahmasmi' or 'I am Brahm'. [This is because Brahm is the only universal, unequivocal, quintessential and irrefutable 'truth' in creation, and the Atma, being pure consciousness, is an embodiment or a personification of this 'truth'. How can one deny one's own existence? It may be difficult to visualise or think about the concept of 'pain' or 'enjoyment', for instance, when it is felt by someone else, but how can one deny this feeling when he personally feels it, when he experiences it first hand? Likewise, it may be difficult to visualise the abstract concept of the Absolute Truth and Consciousness as being one's truthful form known as the 'self', that the 'Truth' is not the visible gross body but something extremely subtle and sublime, and that this 'Truth' is known as the Atma which is all-pervading, universal and all-encompassing entity in the sense that it is present in equal intensity in all living beings of whatever denomination or in whatever form of the visible gross body they have. The realisation of this 'Truth' provides extreme bliss, contentedness, fulfilment and ecstasy. A person may not be easily convinced of this 'Truth' by merely reading the scriptures, but how can someone neglect it when he witnesses this 'Truth' first hand by meditating and concentrating his faculties on searching it out, and then personally experiencing the sublime quality of bliss obtained by this realisation?]

Having a firm conviction and sound belief that there is nothing worth knowing spiritually other than one's own self called the Atma, he becomes liberated and roams around like a free man. He is called a 'Jivan Mukta'—i.e. he is a person who attains freedom from all fetters of ignorance and delusions vis-à-vis the world and the body that tie down an ordinary creature to them, and consequentially he is deemed to be free even though he lives in the same gross world and has a physical gross body.

A Parivrajak who lives in the aforesaid manner is fulfilled and accomplished. He must desist from saying that he is not Brahm, because that would be speaking a lie. On the other hand, he must always assert that 'I am Brahm'. [Foolish people would think that he is mad, is an impostor who is boasting about his exalted spiritual stature, but in fact he is honestly and sincerely speaking the truth.]

An acclaimed and successful Sanyasi passes through the three states of existence such as Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dreaming) and Sushupta (deep sleep) to reach the Turiya state which acts as a stepping stone to the final transcendental state of Turiyateet/Turiyatit (2).

दिवा जाग्रन्नृक्तं स्वप्नं सुषुप्तधर्मरात्रं गतमित्येकावस्थायां चतस्रोऽवस्थास्त्वेकैककरणाधीनानां चतुर्दशकरणानां व्यापारश्चक्षुरादीनाम् । चक्षुषो रूपग्रहणं श्रोत्रयोः शब्दग्रहणं जिह्वाया रसास्वादनं घ्राणस्य गन्धग्रहणं वचसो वाग्व्यापारः पाणोरादानं पादयोः संचारः पायोरुत्सर्ग उपस्थस्यानन्दग्रहणं त्वचः स्पर्शग्रहणम् । तदधीना च विषयग्रहणबुद्धिः बुद्ध्या बुद्ध्यति चित्तेन चेतयत्यहंकारेणाहं करोति । विसृज्य जीव एतान्देहाभिमानेन जीवो भवति । गृहाभिमानेन गृहस्थ इव शरीरे जीवः संचरति ।

प्राग्दले पुण्यावृत्तिरग्नेय्यां निद्रालस्यौ दक्षिणायां क्रौर्यबुद्धिर्नैऋत्यां पापबुद्धिः पश्चिमे क्रीडारतिर्वायव्यां  
गमने बुद्धिरुत्तरे शान्तिरीशान्ये ज्ञानं कर्णिकायां वैराग्यं केसरेष्वात्मचिन्ता इत्येवं वक्त्रं ज्ञात्वा ॥३॥

divā jāgrannaktam svapnam suṣuptamardharātram gatamityekāvasthāyām  
catasro'vasthāstvekaikakaraṇādhīnānām caturdaśakaraṇānām  
vyāpāraścakṣurādīnām /  
cakṣuṣo rūpagrahaṇam śrotrayoḥ śabdagrahaṇam jihvāyā rasāsvādanam  
ghrāṇasya gandhagrahaṇam vacaso vāgvyāpāraḥ pāṇerādānam pādayoḥ  
saṃcāraḥ pāyorutsarga upasthasyānandagrahaṇam tvacaḥ sparśagrahaṇam /  
tadadhīnā ca viśayagrahaṇabuddhiḥ buddhyā buddhyati cittena  
cetayatyaḥaṅkāreṇāhaṅkaroti /  
visṛjya jīva etāndehābhimānena jīvo bhavati /  
grhābhimānena grhastha iva śarīre jīvaḥ saṃcarati /  
prāgdale puṇyāvṛttirāgneyām nidrālasyau dakṣiṇāyām  
krauryabuddhirnairṛtyām pāpabuddhiḥ paścime krīḍāratirvāyavyām gamane  
buddhiruttare śāntirīśānye jñānam karṇikāyām vairāgyam kesareṣvātmacintā  
ityevam vaktram jñātvā // 3 //

3. The daytime is equivalent to the Jagrat or waking state of consciousness, the night is equivalent to the Swapna or dreaming state of consciousness, and the midnight is equivalent to the Sushupta or deep sleep state of consciousness. All these three states of existence are deemed to be included in the fourth state called Turiya, and by the same logic and extension of this phenomenon, these four states are deemed to be included in the last and fifth state of existence called Turiyatit.

[The part of the night post midnight is the period when a man sleeps most soundly and peacefully. It is observed that if one does not sleep during this part of the night, he might not get proper sleep and feels worn out the next day. When a man is fast asleep and totally relaxed, he does not dream. All dreams that a man sees during sleep are bound to create some sort of reaction or response in his sub-conscious mind, though this reaction or response is at the most subtle level as compared to that which is caused in the mind by any event that occurs when the man is awake in this world. The period of sleep implied here is that when the man does not even dream, but is fast and sound asleep. In physical terms also, the period of the night post midnight is most calm and quiet. This period usually lasts for a few hours post midnight, say till the wee hours of early morning. The best and the most relaxing sleep is obtained during this period. Hence, the Turiya state is regarded as being equivalent to this period of sleep in a metaphoric way to indicate the state of the mind which is completely relaxed and totally detached even from the imaginary world of dreams. This is a state which is most rejuvenating for the Spirit of the Sanyasi.

We can take a simple example to understand this phenomenon. A student who is currently doing his post-graduation in, say, history is supposed to have already done his graduation as well as his earlier schooling. It is absurd and incongruous to say that one has reached the level of post-graduation without having passed his school and completing his graduation? Likewise, when a spiritual aspirant has reached the transcendental state of Turiyatit it is deemed that he must have successively passed through the earlier stages of Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya before he has climbed the steps to reach the pinnacle of conscious existence in the transcendental state.]



Now, the functions of the fourteen instruments of the body that work under the overall control and supervision of the four aspects of the Antahakarans (the inner self) that consist of the Mana (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (sub-conscious) and Ahankar (ego, pride) are being described<sup>1</sup>.

The main function of the eye is to create in a creature awareness of and attraction for visual things in this world that have a charming countenance or external features. The ear has the function of making sounds audible for the creature and making him aware of the existence of words and all other forms of sound that imply the presence of life in the surrounding world (because lifeless and inert entities do not emit sound, and dead creatures do not speak). The tongue has the function of tasting and making a creature aware of the various shades of taste that exist in this world. The nose has the function of smell and making the creature aware of different types of smells that exist in this world. The faculty of speech located in the mouth has the function of speaking and enabling the creature to express himself. The hand has the function of accepting or receiving anything, to give it to someone else, or to lift it and take it to some other place. The function of the leg is to walk and carry the creature's body to different places. The anus has the function of eliminating waste from the body. The genitals have the function of recreating and its associated sexual and sensual pleasures. The function of feeling and touching is carried out by the skin. [These are the gross components of the body.]

[Now the subtle components are being discussed.] The function of the Mana (mind) is to accept the sensory inputs fed in by the sense organs of the gross body as outlined above, and then consult the Buddhi (intellect aspect of the brain) so as to intelligently interpret these inputs given by the various gross organs of the body and then make proper and judicious decisions, and give effect to them so that these instruments can carry out their functions in an organised and auspicious way. The Chitta (the sub-conscious, the memory) helps to keep him conscious and internally aware and updated about the happenings, collecting data and storing them for future retrieval and reference, and generally acting as the quick-referral library for the creature. Finally, the component of Ahankar (ego, pride) makes the creature have a sense of individuality, and a feeling of having an independent existence and personality.

When the transcendental element called Consciousness weaves a web consisting of these fourteen threads or parts or components or aspects, the combined effect is the creation of an imaginary body which would naturally consist of these fourteen components. Consequentially, the Consciousness loses its originality and its pristine nature, and instead gets surrounded by this web of its own creation. The latter eventuality results in the creation of the Jiva—i.e. the result is that the eternally immaculate and transcendental Consciousness that has no physical body assumes for its self a body having various gross and subtle components, and a body that lives, interacts and perceives in this world. [That is why, this 'consciousness' or 'Atma' living inside the body of its own creation is called a 'Jiva Atma' or a consciousness that 'lives' (Jiva) in a body as its essence known as the 'soul' or the Atma.]

Just like a man living in a house begins to be known as a 'householder' because he is the proud owner and lord of this house, the Consciousness living in a body comes to be known as a Jiva—i.e. 'the living being'<sup>2</sup>.

Inside the gross body is a subtle heart which is like a lotus having eight petals. The Jiva or the 'true self' of the creature, i.e. his 'pure consciousness or self', resides in this lotus like heart. This Jiva assumes different forms depending upon the perspective with which it is viewed<sup>3</sup>.

When this Jiva (the Atma or consciousness) living inside this lotus wanders or moves around the eastern petal, it develops a tendency for doing auspicious things. When it turns towards the south-east direction, it develops a tendency of laziness, and feels drowsy and lethargic. When it turns towards the south direction, it develops a tendency of cruelty and lack of compassion. When it turns towards the south-west direction, it develops a tendency for auspicious and correct thinking. When it turns towards the western direction, it develops a tendency of remaining engrossed in sports, plays, actions and other such worldly deeds and activities that need physical effort. When it turns towards the north-west direction, its intellect begins to swerve towards nobler ideas and higher goals of life. When it turns towards the north direction, it experiences profound calmness and develops peace of mind. When it turns towards the north-east direction, it acquires eclectic wisdom and enlightenment. When it remains established in the center of the lotus in its thalamus, it develops great Vairagya or a tendency for renunciation and detachment. And when it enters the tendril of the lotus, the creature becomes aware of its pure conscious form known as the Atma (i.e. he becomes 'self-realised').

In this above way, when a wise ascetic becomes aware of this shoot (tendrill) from which the lotus flower has emerged and which is the root cause of his existence as an individual person, he is said to be enlightened. He would have become aware of the pure consciousness called the Atma or soul that is the very essence and at the root cause of his being. When this profound truthful spiritual knowledge sprouts in his inner being, he is deemed to have attained the Turiyatit state of existence (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer Canto 6, verse no. 2, and Canto 5, verse no. 24 of the present Upanishad.

<sup>2</sup>Krishna Yajur Veda's *Saraswati Upanishad*, verse nos. 47-48, and *Rudra Hridaya Upanishad*, verse nos. 41-45 describe how the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness, becomes a Jiva, and in the process outlines who a Jiva actually is.

<sup>3</sup>The *Dhyan Bindu Upanishad*, Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 93/1-93/15 also describes this context where the Atma appears to look different when viewed in different perspectives.]

जीवदवस्थां प्रथमं जाग्रद्वितीयं स्वप्नं तृतीयं सुषुप्तं चतुर्थं तुरीयं चतुर्भिर्विरहितं तुरीयातीतम् । विश्वतैजसप्राज्ञतटस्थभेदैरेक एव एको देवः साक्षी निर्गुणश्च तद्ब्रह्माहमिति व्याहरेत् । नो चेज्जाग्रदवस्थायां जाग्रदादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः स्वप्ने स्वप्नादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः सुषुप्ते सुषुप्त्यादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः तुरीये तुरीयादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः न त्वेवं तुरीयातीतस्य निर्गुणस्य । स्थूलसूक्ष्मकारणरूपैर्विश्वतैजसप्राज्ञेश्वरैः सर्वावस्थासु साक्षी त्वेक एवावतिष्ठते । उत तटस्थो द्रष्टा तटस्थो न द्रष्टा द्रष्टृत्वान्न द्रष्टृव कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वाहंकारादिभिः स्पृष्टो जीवः जीवेतरो न स्पृष्टः । जीवोऽपि न स्पृष्ट इति चेन्न । जीवाभिमानेन क्षेत्राभिमानः शरीराभिमानेन जीवत्वम् । जीवत्वं घटाकाशमहाकाशवद्व्यवधानोऽस्ति । व्यवधानवशादेव हंसः सोऽहमिति मन्त्रेणोच्छ्वासनिःश्वासव्यपदेशेनानुसन्धानं करोति । एवं विज्ञाय शरीराभिमानं त्यजेन्न शरीराभिमानी भवति । स एव ब्रह्मेत्युच्यते ॥४॥

jīvadavasthāṃ prathamam jāgraddvitiyaṃ svapnam tṛtiyaṃ suṣuptam  
caturtham turīyaṃ caturbhirvirahitaṃ turīyātītam /  
viśvataiṣasaprājñatatasthābhedaireka eva eko devaḥ sākṣī nirguṇaśca  
tadbrahmāhamiti vyāharet /  
no cejjāgradavasthāyāṃ jāgradādicatasro'vasthāḥ svapne  
svapnādicatasro'vasthāḥ suṣupte suṣuptyādicatasro'vasthāḥ

turiye turīyādicatasro'vasthāḥ na tvevaṃ turīyātītasya nirguṇasya /  
sthūlasūkṣmakāraṇarūpairviśvataijasaprājñeśvaraiḥ  
sarvāvasthāsu sākṣī tveka evāvatīṣṭhate /  
uta taṭastho draṣṭā taṭastho na draṣṭā draṣṭṛtvānna draṣṭaiva  
karṭṛtvabhokṛtvāhaṅkāradibhiḥ sprṣṭo jīvaḥ jīvetaro na sprṣṭaḥ /  
jīvo'pi na sprṣṭa iti cenna /  
jīvābhimānena kṣetrābhimānaḥśarīrābhimānena jīvatvam /  
jīvatvaṃ ghaṭākāśamahākāśavadvyavadhāne'sti /  
vyavadhānavaśādeva haṃsaḥ so'hamiti  
mantreṇocchvāsaniḥśvāsavyapadeśenānusandhānaṃ karoti /  
evaṃ vijñāya śarīrābhimānaṃ tyajenna śarīrābhimānī bhavati /  
sa eva brahmetyucyate// 4 //

4. The four states in which a Jiva (living being) exists are the following—Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya. The fifth state called the Turiyatit state is beyond these four. [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 24-26; Canto 8, verse nos. 9-11, 20.]

In other words, the same Atma appears to exist in four different forms depending upon these four states of a creature's conscious existence. Hence, the Atma that lives in the Jagrat state is called 'Vishwa', in the Swapna state it is called 'Taijas', in the Sushupta state it is called 'Pragya', and in the Truiya state it is called 'Tathastha' (literally meaning non-involved, indifferent and completely neutral). The Atma or consciousness that exists beyond these four states, the Atma which exists in the transcendental state called Turiyatit, is known as the 'Parmatma'—or the supreme Atma or the transcendental Consciousness. Since it is in 'transcendental' state of existence which goes beyond all the known states of worldly existence, it is natural that it rises above the gross and the mundane, and instead remains free from all the faults and shortcomings that are associated with worldly existence—i.e. the Parmatma is immaculate and devoid of all taints and corruptions that might have shrouded the Atma when it assumes a gross body while it lives in this world. [This is the reason why the Parmatma is compared to the sky because the sky stays above the gross world known as the earth and does not have any of the physical limitations of the earth.]

Again, since the wise ascetic has already realised that his true 'self' is the Atma that lives in the Turiyatit state of existence (refer last paragraph of verse no. 3), it is obvious that he is like this Parmatma. So he exclaims upon this eclectic discovery—'I am Brahm (the Parmatma)!'

A person who lives perpetually in this Turiyatit state is deemed to be free from the limitations imposed by the other four states of existence. It may be argued that this Turiyatit state incorporates all the other four states of existence (as stated in the opening stanzas of verse no. 3), but in actual practice it is perpetually a completely neutral state, and anything that is profoundly and eternally neutral cannot be said to have bias towards any one or the other thing. Since there is no reversal of this state of Turiyatit, i.e. once a man reaches this transcendental state of existence he would not go back to the other four states of existence, he would not be aware of the gross world and his gross organs as done in the Jagrat state, he would not dream as in the Swapna state, he would not be in the temporary state of rest in the Sushupta state which is a transient state as the creature oscillates between the Sushupta and Swapna states while asleep, and he would not even have any junior level of spiritual evolvment as exemplified by the Turiya state which is higher than the Sushupta state but lower than the Turiyatit state. This is because he has reached the highest point in his spiritual

journey and has reached its pinnacle or citadel. There is no existence beyond it; it is the supreme state in which the consciousness can ever expect to exist. Hence, it is honoured by the epithet 'Param'—one that is supreme and beyond which there is nothing.

Since the eternal and truthful Atma (here referring the cosmic transcendental form of the Atma known as Consciousness, rather than the microcosmic form of the Atma that lives inside the body of the individual creature as its Jiva-Atma) is the only conscious and living entity that exists in all of these states of existence, it is deemed to be the only one witness of their presence.

[The gross body ceases to exist in the other states except the Jagrat state. The subtle body consisting of the mind ceases to exist in the Sushupta state. The causal body that harbours the individual's Atma ceases to exist when the creature dies and leaves the gross body. So, none of them are eternal. The Atma itself, though it is eternal and immaculate by nature, becomes mired in the delusions of the world, allows itself to be trapped in the web-like snare created out of its own free will as described earlier in verse no. 3, then remains engrossed in doing so many deeds and suffering from their consequences, has various desires and assumes so many roles voluntarily. Hence, it is also not apparently steady. In other words, the Atma that is called a 'Jiva Atma' is influenced by the environment in which it lives; it is tainted by its surroundings. As compared to this situation, the Parmatma is unaffected by worldly things and is beyond the reach or influence of anything gross and mundane that pertains to this creation, whether it is good or bad. Hence, in this scenario, the only entity that remains constant and unchanging is the Parmatma, the supreme form of the individual Atma which is also known as Brahm. That is also why the latter is called the Absolute Truth—because the latter does not change.

A simple illustration will help to clear the idea. The celestial sun is unmoving and shining brilliantly in a uniform manner. But when seen from earth, it appears to move and even change its brilliance depending upon a number of environmental factors such as the presence of clouds, humidity, dust particles etc. in the atmosphere, etc. The sun also appears to rise and set, is hidden from view behind dark clouds, or even disappears during solar eclipses. But even a high school student knows that none of this is true. Similarly, the disc of the moon appears to have its own light whereas it merely reflects the light of the sun, and it also appears to change its contours every night though this is due to the different angles from which it is viewed from earth every night as a result of its revolution around the earth. The same argument applies to the Parmatma vis-à-vis the Jiva Atma. The Parmatma is like the sun, and the Jiva Atma is like the moon that shines in the light of the sun.]

Since the Parmatma represents that superior aspect of the cosmic Consciousness that is absolutely neutral and detached from everything, including Maya (delusions), it is beyond the purview of the four normal states of conscious existence of a creature. The Atma living in the Turiyatit state is called a Parmatma. In this state, it cannot be called a 'Drasta' of anything, or the one who sees anything, observes anything, or is a witness to anything—because this is a completely neutral and detached state of existence in which the mind and all the other faculties are defunct, and in which nothing matters for the super-conscious Atma<sup>1</sup>.

In such a case, should one regard the Jiva (the living being) as the Drasta? [That is, if the Parmatma is not the Drasta or the one who sees, observes and witnesses anything because of its sublime cosmic existence and neutral character, then can one treat the creature that has a gross existence in a visible world of material sense objects as the seer, observer and witness?]

No, the Jiva (living being) is also not the Drasta in the true sense because his 'true self' is the Atma that is a most subtle and sublime entity which is really not involved in anything related to the gross body as well as the gross world. This Atma is pure consciousness like the Parmatma (which is the 'supreme Atma' or the cosmic Consciousness which is the macrocosmic form of the individual creature's Atma). The Atma possesses all the virtues of the Parmatma in the sense that it is equally neutral, dispassionate, detached etc. from anything gross and untrue. The problem arises only when the creature, under the influence of delusions and ignorance, begins to identify himself with the gross body in which this Atma lives and erroneously begins to treat this body as his 'true self and identity'. This body lives and interacts with the gross material world of sense objects.

So, when the creature begins to identify himself with the body, he becomes a 'Drasta' because then he begins to 'see and perceive' this world through the organs of perception of the body. Now he becomes someone who 'sees', someone who perceives, feels, tastes, touches, smells etc. The world becomes his object of perception or the 'Drisya'. The Drasta (the seer or observer) is affected naturally by the Drisya (the objects or things seen or observed). The sight influences him and creates either a positive or a negative impression on his sub-conscious and psyche. Such a creature cannot remain immune from, unaffected by or indifferent to his surroundings and what he 'sees' simply because his mind and intellect are not attuned to see the 'truth'. Had they been so, the creature would have realised that the body—which actually does the seeing or perceiving of the objects of the world—is not his truthful identity at all in the first place. The fact that he has not realised what his true nature is becomes the breeding ground for illusions of his being a 'Drasta' or the seer. Such a 'Drasta' gets embroiled in the affairs of the gross world because he 'sees' this world as being true—though this perception is absolutely erroneous.

On the other hand is the person who can be regarded as a 'neutral Drasta or a non-Drasta'. This wise man knows that his 'true form' is not the body but the Atma that lives in this body. Such a wise and erudite man would do things in this world like another 'ordinary' man, but with the difference that he does not get involved in anything the body does at the emotional and sub-conscious level. His mind neither gets involved in what his body does, nor does it register or store any information in its memory bank regarding the humdrum affairs of the world.

Therefore it is derived that the same Jiva Atma (a living being) can either be a 'Drasta' or a 'non-Drasta' depending upon the level of its wisdom and intellectual development in the spiritual sphere. That is, everything depends on the level in which a living being's Atma or pure consciousness exists in this world. In other words, at the lower level and grosser level of existence of the consciousness, the Jiva becomes a 'Drasta', while at the higher level of existence he is a 'non-Drasta'. A Drasta is involved in and influenced by the world, while the non-Drasta is uninvolved and neutral.

In other words, if the Atma relates itself to the world—whether at the gross level corresponding to the Jagrat state known as the waking state of consciousness in the physical world, or at the lower subtle level corresponding to the Swapna state known as the dreaming state of consciousness in the world of dreams—then this Atma is known as the 'Drasta'. But when the same Atma lives in the Turiya state of consciousness that transcends these levels of existence of consciousness—when it is completely detached from the world, the physical body and the subtle mind—then it is known as the 'non-Drasta'.]

Now suppose it is said that the Jiva's (living being's) true nature is not to remain involved in worldly affairs as his 'true form' is the Atma which is pure consciousness that is equivalent to the cosmic Consciousness called the Parmatma, then this logic also does not hold its ground of validity. This is because as soon as the Atma assumes a gross body, it is immediately shrouded by the ego and pride of having a body. It is almost impossible to find a living being or a Jiva who would not accept that he has a body. In fact, the very concept of being a 'Jiva' rests on the premise that the Atma has a body. Therefore, if this notion of being a possessor of a body is done away with, it is only then that the Jiva becomes equivalent to the Parmatma. [The Atma is proud of the body because this body gives the Atma its form, its identity as an individual; it is by the medium of the gross body that the Atma is able to perform stupendous tasks in this world, achieves success in various fields and acquire name and fame; it is the body which helps the Atma to do deeds that are righteous, noble, auspicious and holy. The Atma is only a Spirit without a form, and to be identified it needs a physical form which the body provides. Hence, the Atma is proud of its association with the body. This stokes the ego and makes the Atma possessive of the body.]

In other words, the difference between a Jiva and the Parmatma is just like the difference between the Ghatakash and the Mahakash. [The Ghatakash is the space present inside a hollow pitcher, and the Mahakash is the vast open sky outside the vessel. The Ghatakash is separated from the Mahakash by the physical body of the pitcher. Actually there is no distinction between the space inside and outside the pitcher, for if the vessel is broken the two spaces coalesce instantly and effortlessly.] The two names of the same thing are given only in an abstract manner for the purpose of study, for in actuality there is no difference. So therefore, a Jiva has a distinct existence only as long as it has the body—or is conscious that it has the body, and as soon as this awareness of the body is removed, the two—the Jiva and the Parmatma—become one.

[Another instance is cited now.] The same breath moves out and in the body as exhalation and inhalation. While doing so, it makes two distinct sounds—'Ha' and 'Sa' respectively. That is, while moving out the sound is equivalent to the letter 'Ha' of the Sanskrit language, and when moving in the sound is equivalent to the letter 'Sa'. This forms the Mantra 'Hans', meaning a divine Swan. In other words, the Jiva's Pran or vital winds also display artificial distinction as being exhaled breath and inhaled breath though the air is the same entity that cannot be distinguished and mutated. A wise, self-realised and enlightened ascetic understands the esoteric message encrypted in this sound of Hans. He realises that the breath is telling him that he is like the divine bird Swan which is regarded as the purest and the wisest amongst the birds<sup>2</sup>. So, a wise ascetic always concentrates upon his pure and enlightened form known as the Atma that has no physical body like this wind or air element which too has no physical body. The Atma then becomes equivalent to the Parmatma.

With this sublime and eclectic spiritual view firmly established in his inner self, the enlightened ascetic discards all sense of ego and pride vis-à-vis the body. And when this happens, he becomes one with the Parmatma (as explained above) (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word 'Drasta' means one who sees, observes something. It is the mind that registers any sight that is seen, or any other perception for that matter, in order to enable the man to actually see or perceive the particular thing. For instance, a man might be gazing at something continuously but he might not be actually seeing it because his mind is lost in some other thoughts. In the present case when we refer to an ascetic in the Turiyatit state of existence we find that he is so much absorbed in meditation and reflection upon the truth of the Atma, his pure consciousness, and

remains submerged in its thoughts and the bliss derived from it that he is totally oblivious about the surroundings. So he lives in a perpetual trance, and though he might beg for food or take a bath in the river, actually, at the mental level, he is not doing anything at all. If one asks him anything about his actions, his answer naturally would be in the negative, and in this he would be speaking the actual and sincere truth.

This also explains the difference between the Turiya and the Turiyatit states. The living being who has vestiges of awareness left in him, even of the fact that he is an ascetic or a Sanyasi, or the fact that he is enlightened and wise, may have risen above the rest of the creatures and live in a Turiya state of trance-like existence that resembles Turiyatit state, but he has not achieved truthful success. That comes when he reaches the Turiyatit state of complete unawareness and neutrality—or a state of ‘non-knowledge’. Obviously, a man who has no true knowledge of anything would not be able to see or hear or feel or taste or smell anything, simply because he does not know what these things mean or from where they originate or how to perceive them or distinguish between any two of them. This state is the truthful Turiyatit state. The Atma that lives in this eclectic transcendental state is the superior Atma called the ‘Parmatma’. It is exemplarily neutral and dispassionate. It does not see and bear witness to any thing or event. It is not concerned with anything. Hence it is called a non-Drasta—one who does not see.

<sup>2</sup>The concept of Hans and the Mantra ‘Hans’ has been described in a number of Upanishads. The enlightened and realised person thinks of himself as a Swan and feels exhilarated that he is not an ordinary man bogged down by worldly fetters, but an exalted soul that is like a Swan.

The bird Swan or Hans is considered the most pure, clean, wise, erudite and clever among the birds. It is said to eat pearls, which means it picks up and accepts only the best amid the variety of things available to it in the form of an assortment of various gems and jewels representing the dazzling charms of this world. It is also reputed to drink milk leaving aside the water content in it symbolising its ability to imbibe the essence and the best, and leave the rest aside. It is also the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati, the patron Goddess of knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, speech and learning, indicating that it bears these glorious virtues. Hence, the reference to a swan while describing a creature conscious of the vital wind or Pran passing through him means the basic, inherent and intrinsic tendency of that wisened and intelligent creature is to be the best, most pure and divine, wise, awakened and enlightened, adroit, clever and sagacious like the swan, and pick all the goodness and forsake all that is bad in this world. Saraswati rides on a swan, symbolising the creature’s inborn enlightenment and excellence of his mental caliber. Symbolically, Saraswati resides in his Pran because it rides on the swan, i.e. in his heart, throat and mind—that is, his heart has purity of emotions, he speaks well of all, and his wise words are sought after by all as priceless gems of wisdom, and his mind is intelligent, discerning and noble. A wise man is expected to pick the truth from amongst the basket of assorted charms present in this creation, and leave aside the non-truths.

The alphabet ‘Ha’ of the word ‘Hans’ is sounded by the vibration of the exhaled wind passing through the vocal cords present in the throat or the wind pipe which connects to the nose, while the alphabet ‘Sa’ is sounded by the root of the tongue which opens into the mouth when the breath is inhaled. Both the nose and the mouth open in the same cavity called the throat. Hence, the inter relationship between ‘Ha’ and ‘Sa’ is evident. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is like the divine swan, but he was unaware of his own divinity and sublimity, his exalted and noble stature, till that was pointed out to him. So he must become one like a ‘swan’, remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan.

During the twenty-four hour period covering a single day and night, a person inhales and exhales, or breathes, roughly twenty-one thousand times, because each cycle of inhalation and exhalation is equivalent to saying one Mantra 'Hans' consisting of the two syllables 'Ha and Sa' (refer Dhyānbindu Upanishad, verse no. 63).

References for *Hans*—References for the term 'Hans' (a divine Swan/Mantra)—  
 (a) Krishna Yajur Veda—Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 6; Canto 6, verse no. 15; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 3-4; Dhyān Bindu Upanishad, verse nos. 24, 61-65; Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse nos. 16, 20-28, 34, 60-64, 78-79; Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-132, Canto 2, verse nos. 9-11, Canto 6, verse no. 20, 35-36, 53-54; Yogtattva Upanishad, verse no. 99. (b) Shukla Yajur Veda—Hanso-panishad is exclusively dedicated to explain the concept of the pure conscious Atma by way of using the metaphor of a Hans. (c) Sam Veda—Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 31-35, 82-83, 93. (d) Atharva Veda—Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 4, 12-22, 26-27; Canto 2, verse nos. 1-3; Mahavakya Upanishad, verse no. 6; Hayagriva Upanishad, verse no. 10.]

त्यक्तसङ्गो जितक्रोधो लघ्वाहारो जितेन्द्रियः । पिधाय बुद्ध्या द्वाराणि मनो ध्याने निवेशयेत् ॥५॥

tyaktasaṅgo jitakrodho laghvāhāro jitendriyaḥ /  
 pidhāya buddhyā dvārāṇi mano dhyāne niveśayet // 5 //

5. A wise and learned Parivrajak (Sanyasi) is he who is free from all attractions and affections of any kind that might create some sort of emotional or mental attachments or bonds for him with anything.

He must strive to keep anger, wrath and the tendency to be vehement, retributory and vengeful under strict control. [Refer Canto 3, verse nos. 42-43.]

Eating frugally, with restrictions and moderation, he must keep all his sense organs under restraint. [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 33-34.]

Shutting off all the external openings or doorways of these sense organs of the body through which they have a natural tendency to move out into the world, i.e. preventing these sense organs from being extrovert, he should rather turn them inwards, and focus his Mana or mind and its energy to meditate, to reflect upon and research the true nature of his Atma. This is his prime duty.

A spiritual aspirant who has interest in Yoga (meditation and contemplation) must always remain absorbed in his spiritual pursuit, without getting disturbed, distracted or diverted from his main goal (5).

शून्येष्वेवावकाशेषु गुहासु च वनेषु च । नित्ययुक्तः सदा योगी ध्यानं सम्यगुपक्रमेत् ॥६॥

śūnyeṣvevākāśeṣu guhāsu ca vaneṣu ca /  
 nityayuktaḥ sadā yogī dhyānaṁ samyagupakramet // 6 //

6. He should live alone in a serene, secluded and lonely place, such as a forest or a cave, and remain engrossed and submerged in reflection upon the Atma. [This is because such a place would provide him with the necessary peace of mind where he will not be disturbed or distracted from his spiritual pursuit. Here, he would be able to concentrate his mind and attention on meditation and contemplation.] (6).



आतिथ्यश्राद्धयज्ञेषु देवयात्रोत्सवेषु च । महाजनेषु विद्ध्यर्थी न गच्छेद्योगवित्क्वचित् ॥७॥

ātithyaśrāddhayajñeṣu devayātrotsaveṣu ca /  
mahājaneṣu siddhyarthī na gacchedyogavitkvacit // 7 //

7. An ascetic (Sanyasi or Parivrajak) must never participate in any formal rituals and other religious activities such as Aathithya (accepting to be a honoured guest himself, or welcoming someone else as a guest), doing Shraaddha (offering libations and oblations to the spirit of dead ancestors), performing Yagya (various religious rites and rituals such as formal fire sacrifices or religious ceremonies), Deva worship (worship of deities and its attendant formal rituals), and going on a Yatra (pilgrimage) (7).

[Note—Refer also to verse nos. 37-38 and 42 of the present Canto 6.]

यथैनमवमन्यन्ते जनाः परिभवन्ति च । तथा युक्तश्चरेद्योगी सतां वर्त्म न दूषयेत् ॥८॥

yathainamavamanyante janāḥ paribhavanti ca /  
tathā yuktaścedyogī satāṃ vartma na dūṣayet // 8 //

8. In order to avoid any sort of contact with people of the world, he should purposely behave in an unconventional way so that no one wishes to go near him, have any dealings with him, and instead continue to neglect him (8).

वाग्दण्डः कर्मदण्डश्च मनोदण्डश्च ते त्रयः । यस्यैते नियता दण्डाः स त्रिदण्डी महायतिः ॥९॥

vāgdaṇḍaḥ karmadaṇḍaśca manodaṇḍaśca te trayaḥ /  
yasyaite niyatā daṇḍāḥ sa tridaṇḍī mahāyatiḥ // 9 //

9. A true Parivrajak holding the ‘Tridand’<sup>1</sup> is one who has exercised his control over the Vaani (speech), the Mana (mind) and the Karma (deeds). An ascetic who holds the Tridand with this understanding and faith is called a true Sanyasi. [To wit, he must understand the significance of this wooden staff, that it is a symbol of his obligations towards his own self for his spiritual elevation and progress. If he holds a Tridand and does not follow the rules associated with this symbol of Sanyas then he is cheating himself and others.] (9).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The ascetic’s staff, called a Danda, is an important insignia of a Sanyasi (an itinerant mendicant, a monk, a friar, an ascetic, or a hermit who has renounced the world and taken the religious vows of Sanyas as prescribed in the scriptures). He is expected to always carry it with him wherever he goes. The ‘Tridand’ basically means three staffs or sticks tied together, each made up of bamboo. This is done for easy carrying. The word ‘Danda’ stands for self control, and therefore these three strands of the ascetic’s staff stand for a combined control of the mind, called the Mana Dand, control over the speech, called the Vaak Dand, and control over the body, called Kaya Dand. This Danda is like a scepter held by a king; it is a symbol of his spiritual kingship and distinguishes him from the rest of the people; it is his symbol of moral and spiritual authority.]

विधूमे च प्रशान्ताग्नौ यस्तु माधूकरीं चरेत् । गृहे च विप्रमुख्यानां यतिः सर्वोत्तमः स्मृतः ॥१०॥

vidhūme ca praśāntāgnau yastu mādhuakarīm caret /  
gr̥he ca viprmukhyānām yatiḥ sarvottamaḥ smṛtaḥ // 10 //

10. The best type of Sanyasi is he who accepts food by begging from a household in which the cooking is over and the smoke from the fire of the oven in which the cooking is done is extinguished. [That is, he does not accept food while the cooking is still continuing.] (10).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse no. 35.]

दण्डभिक्षां च यः कुर्यात्स्वधर्मे व्यसनं विना । यस्तिष्ठति न वैराग्यं याति नीचयतिर्हि सः ॥११॥

daṇḍabhikṣāṃ ca yaḥ kuryātsvadharme vyasanaṃ vinā /  
yastiṣṭhati na vairāgyaṃ yāti nīcayatirhi saḥ // 11 //

11. But a Sanyasi who has no true sense of renunciation in his inner self, and only begs for food as a means of survival or livelihood (so that he can easily get cooked food without taking the trouble of cooking it himself or because he is too lazy to make effort for arranging raw materials needed for cooking) is an impostor who is deemed to be of a very low category. [In fact, he is demeaning and insulting the august institution of Sanyas. He has not understood the real meaning and intention of the Sanyas way of life.] (11).

यस्मिन्गृहे विशेषेण लभेद्भिक्षां च वासनात् । तत्र नो याति यो भूयः स यतिर्नेतरः स्मृतः ॥१२॥

yasmingr̥he viśeṣeṇa labhedbhikṣāṃ ca vāsanāt /  
tatra no yāti yo bhūyaḥ sa yatirnetaraḥ smṛtaḥ // 12 //

12. He must not go again to the household from where he has got food once. If he does so, it would be tantamount to developing attachment or attraction or affection which is absolutely avoidable for a Sanyasi (12).

यः शरीरेन्द्रियादिभ्यो विहीनं सर्वसाक्षिणम् । पारमार्थिकविज्ञानं सुखात्मानं स्वयंप्रभम् ॥१३॥  
परतत्त्वं विजानाति सोऽतिवर्णाश्रमी भवेत् । वर्णाश्रमादयो देहे मायया परिकल्पिताः ॥१४॥

yaḥ śarīrendriyādibhyo vihīnaṃ sarvasākṣiṇam /  
pāramārthika vijñānaṃ sukhātmānaṃ svayaṃprabham // 13 //  
paratattvaṃ vijānāti so'tivarnāśramī bhavet /  
varnāśramādayo dehe māyayā parikalpitāḥ // 14 //

13-14. A wise, erudite, learned and enlightened self-realised Sanyasi is one who visualises himself as a personification of Brahm, the supreme Consciousness, the Supreme Being who is an embodiment of such glorious virtues as Prakash (light and illumination), Vigyan (true knowledge that stands the test of proof, time and logic)

and Sukh (spiritual happiness and comfort), who is known as Sarwa-Sakshi (the witness of all), who is different from the body and its organs, who is eternal and imperishable in this creation, and who is beyond the jurisdiction of various Varnas and Ashrams (the different classes in the society and the various phases in the life of a man respectively).

Indeed, when the ascetic has developed this eclectic, holy, divine and sublime view about himself, he becomes one with and indistinguishable from the supreme transcendental Divinity known as Brahm; he becomes a living Brahm. Such a Sanyasi is a true Sanyasi (13-14).

नात्मनो बोधरूपस्य मम ते सन्ति सर्वदा । इति यो वेद वेदान्तैः सोऽतिवर्णाश्रमी भवेत् ॥१५॥

nātmano bodharūpasya mama te santi sarvadā /  
iti yo veda vedāntaiḥ so'tivarnāśramī bhavet // 15 //

15. An ascetic or Sanyasi who honestly treats himself as the Atma that is truly enlightened and wise, and distances himself from such worldly considerations and artificial classifications as belonging to one or the other Varna and Ashram (i.e. the different classes in the society and the various phases in the life of a man respectively), is indeed a true and sincere Sanyasi (15).

यस्य वर्णाश्रमाचारो गलितः स्वात्मदर्शनात् । स वर्णानाश्रमान्सर्वानतीत्य स्वात्मनि स्थितः ॥१६॥

yasya varṇāśramācāro galitaḥ svātmadarśanāt /  
sa varṇānāśramānsarvānatītya svātmani sthitaḥ // 16 //

16. An ascetic or Sanyasi who has experienced the eclectic nature of his own Atma first hand, who has realised that is his true 'self' is the Atma, the pure consciousness, and not the gross body and its components, and as a consequent development has discarded all formalities such as observance of various codes of conduct related to the different Varnas and Ashrams in life (because they relate to the external gross body and not to the Atma)— actually only such a Sanyasi is regarded as being one who is 'self-realised' and 'enlightened about his true self' in the real sense (16).

योऽतीत्य स्वाश्रमान्वर्णानात्मन्येव स्थितः पुमान् । सोऽतिवर्णाश्रमी प्रोक्तः सर्ववेदार्थवेदिभिः ॥१७॥

yo'tītya svāśramānvarṇānātmanyeva sthitaḥ pumān /  
so'tivarnāśramī proktaḥ sarvavedārthavedibhiḥ // 17 //

17. Such a highly enlightened and self-realised ascetic or Sanyasi (as described in the forgoing verses) has been described as 'Ati-varnaashrami' (one who has transcended the limitations, barriers, compulsions and obligations that are imposed upon a man by the requirements of different Varnas and Ashrams in society) by those who are expert teachers of the philosophy of the Vedas (17).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse no. 50, stanza no. 1.]

तस्मादन्यगता वर्णा आश्रमा अपि नारद । आत्मन्यारोपिताः सर्वे भ्रान्त्या तेनात्मवेदिना ॥१८॥

tasmādanyagatā varṇā āśramā api nārada /  
ātmanyāropitāḥ sarve bhrāntyā tenātmavedinā // 18 //

18. Those who are experts in the philosophy pertaining to the sublime, divine, holy and eclectic nature of the Atma assert that to superimpose the Atma with the characteristics of the gross body is highly stupid, wrong and useless. [That is, to treat the Atma on the same plane as the body, or even to compare it with the body, or transpose the attributes of the body upon the Atma is a wrong thing to do because these two entities have no correlation and similarity of any kind whatsoever.] (18).

न विधिर्न निषेधश्च न वर्ज्यावर्ज्यकल्पना । ब्रह्मविज्ञानिनामस्ति तथा नान्यच्च नारद ॥१९॥

na vidhirna niṣedhaśca na varjyāvarjyakalpanā /  
brahmavijñānināmasti tathā nānyacca nārada // 19 //

19. For an ascetic or Sanyasi who is firmly established in the knowledge of Brahm, who has become Brahm-realised, nothing more is left to be known or researched by him, there are no special rules of conduct that he must follow or avoid. In fact, nothing is worth leaving or discarding by him; there is nothing that he should either accept or reject.

Verily, such an ascetic is freed from all fetters and obligations (19).

विरज्य सर्वभूतेभ्य आ विरिञ्चपदादपि । घृणां विपाठ्य सर्वस्मिन्पुत्रवित्तादिकेष्वपि ॥२०॥

virajya sarvabhūtebhya ā viriñcipadādapi /  
ghṛṇām vipāṭhya sarvasminputramitrādikeṣvapi // 20 //

20. A true spiritual aspirant must have indifference towards all honours, titles and epithets that can be got as a human being or even as the creator Brahma<sup>1</sup>. [That is, he should not be attracted by praise and lavish honours that one usually yearns for. For him, even the exalted stature like that of the creator Brahma is of no value.]

He must have no affections for or attachments with anything, and that includes even his own son and wealth (20).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer verse no. 42 of the present Canto 6, as well as verse nos. 30, 34, 56 of Canto 5 also.]

श्रद्धालुमुक्तिमार्गेषु वेदान्तज्ञानलिप्सया । उपायनकरो भूत्वा गुरुं ब्रह्मविदं व्रजेत् ॥२१॥

śraddhālurmuktimārgeṣu vedāntajñānalipsayā /  
upāyanakaro bhūtvā gurum brahmavidam vrajet // 21 //

21. On the contrary, he should have attraction only for the path that would give him eternal freedom and lead to his liberation and deliverance, the path that would provide him with emancipation and salvation.

In order to gain the sublime and eclectic knowledge enshrined in the Upanishads, he must approach a Guru (a wise and learned teacher) with some Samidha (gift) in hand<sup>1</sup> (21).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Samidha*, technically speaking, refers to the firewood used for a fire sacrifice. It also refers to a token gift that an aspirant/seeker of knowledge takes to his learned teacher when he approaches the latter with some spiritual or metaphysical query. When the teacher sees the aspirant approaching him with Samidha held in his hands, he immediately knows that the aspirant is coming to acquire some knowledge which the teacher is bound to give as per tradition; he cannot refuse to give knowledge because the Samidha is a sign of submission and humility as well as sincerity and eagerness on the part of the disciple.

It was a usual practice to approach some wise man with the purpose of enquiry and acquisition of knowledge with some gift, and this gift, known as Samidha, was not material wealth but as an offering to the fire sacrifice because of three reasons. One, a wise man was not supposed to be yearning for some sort of gold or silver gift, for had he been such he wouldn't qualify to be approached with some spiritual and metaphysical query. Second, this token gift indicated that the seeking of knowledge and imparting of such knowledge was just like the performance of some sacred religious fire sacrifice, and had the same spiritual value. So the teacher couldn't refuse to answer the query as this would amount to refusal in participating in a fire sacrifice which would be tantamount to sacrilege and unrighteous deed on the part of the teacher. This obligation ensured that the query was certain to be answered. Hence, all sincere seekers approached their teachers with this Samidha in hand. And finally the third reason is that it showed sincerity and eagerness on the part of the questioner and seeker of knowledge to find out the correct answer to his queries.

The Mundak Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 2, section 1, verse no. 8 refers to the *seven* types of Samidhas (fuel for the fire sacrifice; the firewood) and seven types of Yagyas (fire sacrifice). Now let us see which are these seven Samidhas and seven Yagyas. Since the term Homa and Havi are an integral part of the fire sacrifice, they should be understood as well in order to get a comprehensive picture.

The seven types of Samidhas which are the offerings that are made to the sacred fire and help to keep it lit are the wood of seven types of trees which can be used for this purpose. They are—Ashvattha (*Ficus religiosa*), Bilva (*Aegle marmelos*), Chandan (sandal wood), Devdaaru (pine), Khadira (*Acacia catechu*), Nayagrodha (Indian fig tree), and Palaas (*Butea frondosa*).

The wood from the following trees are not to be used for the purpose of Samidha—Bibhitak (*Terminalia bellerica*), Kapittha (wood apple), and Neem (margosa) tree.]

सेवाभिः परितोष्यैनं चिरकालं समाहितः । सदा वेदान्तवाक्यार्थं शृणुयात्सुसमाहितः ॥२२॥

sevābhiḥ paritoṣyainaṁ cirakālaṁ samāhitaḥ /  
sadā vedāntavākyaṛtham śṛṇuyātsusamāhitaḥ // 22 //

22. While living under the guidance of the learned Guru, he must serve him diligently and selflessly in order to keep him pleased. [This ensures that the teacher would teach him everything he knows, to the best of his ability, as he would be satisfied by the disciple's service and feel morally obliged to teach him in the best way he can. The teacher would be inclined to divulge even the greatest secrets of the Upanishads to

him, a thing that he would generally avoid to do because it has been ordained in the Upanishads themselves that its secrets should not be given to all and sundry at random, but only to sincere, devoted, eligible, able and competent aspirant.]

He must also strive to gather as much and as deep knowledge of the Upanishads as he can possibly do by studying them deeply and with full concentration so that he can understand their esoteric secrets and fully grasp the great sayings of these scriptures to such an extent that they become firmly engrained and find deep roots in his sub-conscious as well as the conscious mind (22).

निर्ममो निरहंकारः सर्वसङ्गविवर्जितः । सदा शान्त्यादियुक्तः सन्नात्मन्यात्मानमीक्षते ॥२३॥

nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ sarvasaṅgavivarjitaḥ /  
sadā śāntyādiyuktaḥ sannātmanyātmānamīkṣate // 23 //

23. An ascetic or Sanyasi must discard Mamta (affections, endearment, and the resultant sense of attraction and attachment for anything or anyone) and Ahankar (ego, pride and vanity) completely. [Refer verse no. 28 below.]

He must also keep a safe distance from all sorts of Aasakti (attractions, attachments, affections, endearment and involvements) relating to anything or anyone in this world.

Instead, he must arm himself with the virtues of Sham and Dam (self-restraint of the sense organs as well as the mind) and remain ever submerged or absorbed in reflection upon the Atma, and experiencing its eclectic presence in his own inner self (23).

संसारदोषदृष्ट्यैव विरक्तिर्जायते सदा । विरक्तस्य तु संसारात्संन्यासः स्यान्न संशयः ॥२४॥

saṁsāradoṣadrṣṭyaiva viraktirjāyate sadā /  
viraktasya tu saṁsārātsaṁnyāsaḥ syānna saṁśayaḥ // 24 //

24. When one closely observes constant miseries and sufferings associated with birth, death, old age and other such imperfections that are associated with this mortal gross world, a natural sense of disillusionment and detachment with this world sprouts in the heart of an intelligent and thinking man. He wishes to abandon such a faulty world that is perishable and transient, a world which has a preponderance of sufferings instead of happiness, peace and bliss. Hence, a man who has developed truthful detachment from and disillusionment with this world can find it easy to renounce it completely, and therefore such a man can become a true Sanyasi. Only such a man would willingly accept the life of a Sanyasi and be successful in it. There is no doubt about it (24).

मुमुक्षुः परहंसाख्यः साक्षान्मोक्षैकसाधनम् । अभ्यसेद्ब्रह्मविज्ञानं वेदान्तश्रवणादिना ॥२५॥

mumukṣuḥ parahaṁsākhyāḥ sāksānmokṣaikasāadhanam /  
abhyasedbrahmavijñānaṁ vedāntaśravaṇādinā // 25 //

25. A Param-hans Sanyasi who aspires to obtain emancipation and salvation must endeavour to acquire the eclectic knowledge of the sublime and supreme Brahm by studying and hearing the teachings of the Upanishads in this connection with due diligence and sincerity. This is the only way that can provide him with spiritual liberation and deliverance (25).

ब्रह्मविज्ञानलाभाय परहंससमाह्वयः । शान्तिदान्यादिभिः सर्वैः साधनैः सहितो भवेत् ॥२६॥

brahmavijñānalābhāya parahaṃsasamāhvayaḥ /  
śāntidāntyādibhiḥ sarvaiḥ sādhanaiḥ sahito bhavet // 26 //

26. A Param-hans Sanyasi must be fully endowed with the grand virtues of Sham and Dam (refer verse no. 23) in order to fully benefit from the teachings of the Upanishads and be enabled to access the knowledge of Brahm (26).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse no. 21.]

वेदान्ताभ्यासनिरतः शान्तो दान्तो जितेन्द्रियः । निर्भयो निर्ममो नित्यो निर्द्वन्द्वो निष्परिग्रहः ॥२७॥

vedāntābhyāsanirataḥ śānto dānto jitendriyaḥ /  
nirbhayo nirmamo nityo nirdvandvo niṣparigrahaḥ // 27 //

27. A wise ascetic or Sanyasi should always remain submerged in the study and learning as well as the implementation of the teachings of the Upanishads.

Armed with the glorious virtues of Sham and Dam (verse no. 23, 26), he must practice strict control over his mind and the sense organs of the body.

He should abandon all fears, reservations and inhibitions.

He should have no attachments with or affections for anything or anyone under any circumstance.

He must live a carefree life without having any kind of worries and confusions.

He must never accumulate and store anything. He should forgo this inclination for all times to come (27).

जीर्णकौपीनवासाः स्यान्मुण्डी नग्नोऽथ वा भवेत् । प्राज्ञो वेदान्तविद्योगी निर्ममो निरहंकृतिः ॥२८॥

jīrṇakaupīnavāsāḥ syānmuṇḍī nagnō'tha vā bhavet /  
prājño vedāntavidyogī nirmamo nirahaṅkṛtiḥ // 28 //

28. A Sanyasi should tonsure his head. He must use old and used clothes to make a loin-cloth. Besides this piece of covering on his private parts, he must otherwise remain naked, not using any cloth to cover his body.

He must never harbour such traits as Mamta and Moha (affections, attractions, attachments, endearments, longings) as well as Ahankar (ego and pride) in his bosom. [Refer verse no. 23 above in this Canto.] (28).

मित्रादिषु समो मैत्रः समस्तेष्वेव जन्तुषु । एको ज्ञानी प्रशान्तात्मा स संतरति नेतरः ॥२९॥

mitrādiṣu samo maitraḥ samasteṣveva jantuṣu /  
eko jñānī praśāntātmā sa santarati netaraḥ // 29 //

29. An ascetic or Sanyasi who treats both the enemy and the friend alike, and whose inner self is eternally calm and poised—only such a wise and enlightened person is eligible to obtain Mukti or liberation and deliverance from the fetters of this world and is able to cross this huge and seemingly insurmountable world which is like a vast ocean. A man who does not have this wisdom will not be able to do so (29).

गुरुणां च हिते युक्तस्तत्र संवत्सरं वसेत् । नियमेष्वप्रमत्तस्तु यमेषु च सदा भवेत् ॥३०॥

gurūṇāṃ ca hite yuktastatra saṁvatsaraṃ vaset /  
niyameṣvapramāttastu yameṣu ca sadā bhavet // 30 //

30. A spiritual aspirant eager for knowledge should remain diligent while serving the Guru and keep him fully pleased with his devotion and service. He must stay in the Guru's hermitage for one year. He must never show carelessness or lethargy in observing the laws and by-laws of the Ashram (here meaning both the hermitage of the Guru as well as the celibate life of a Brahmachari that the student leads).

He must show extra care and diligence in constantly observing all the tenets of Yam and Niyam while he spends time in the hermitage<sup>1</sup> (30).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The various Yams and Niyams are briefly the various laws and regulations that a Brahmachari or a student leading the life of a celibate must observe.

The ten 'Yams' are—truthfulness, forgiveness, simplicity, Dhyan (meditation, concentration of the mind), lack of cruelty (or presence of compassion and mercy), forsaking violence, restraint of mind and sense organs, pleasant demeanors and sweet towards all). The ten 'Niyams' are— cleanliness/ablution, bath (purification of body), Tapa (austerities, penances, sufferings), alms and charities, keeping silence, Yagya (sacrifices, religious rituals), self study, observance of vows, keeping fasts, celibacy. (Skanda Puran, Bra. Dha. Ma. 5/19-21)

The *Varaaha Upanishad* of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its canto 5, verse nos. 12 ½ --14 also describes these Yams and Niyams.

The *Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad* of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse nos. 32-32 describes Yam and Niyam in the following way—"Non-violence, truthfulness, non stealing, celibacy, continence or abstinence from sexual indulgences and other pervert activities of the body and mind, mercy and compassion, simplicity and humility (32), forgiveness, patience and fortitude, restrained eating, and purity of mind, intellect and body—these are regarded as the ten supreme *Yams*. 'Tapa', meaning austerity, penance, sufferance and hardships endured for some noble cause, 'Santosh', meaning contentedness and satiety, to have belief on the doctrines and teachings of the scriptures, to make charities and donations, the remembrance of the supreme Lord known as 'Hari' and devotedly serving him and contemplating upon him<sup>1</sup> (33), hearing Vedanta (the preaching of Upanishads), to have modesty, honour, dignity, self respect and shame, to have wisdom and intelligence, to repeat the holy Mantras or divine, ethereal words of the Lord, and to keep stern religious vows and observe fasting—these are ten *Niyams*."

According to *Mandal Brahmin Upanishad* of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, Brahman 1, section 1, verse nos. 3-4, the Yam and Niyam are the following—"Verse no. 3 = To overcome the notion of feeling (excessive) heat and cold (and getting



agitated about them), to have control over the urge to eat and sleep (more than necessary), to remain ever calm and tranquil (even during the greatest of adversities), to remain unwavering and steady (like a mountain and the flame of a lamp protected from the wind), and to be able to exercise control over the sense organs (of perception and action)—these are categorised as the various ‘Yams’ (3).

“Verse no. 4 =Devotion towards one’s moral preceptor, teacher and guide called a Guru, dedication and diligent pursuit of the path which is righteous, auspicious and noble, contentedness with whatever is available, residence in a secluded and serene place that gives peace, solitude, tranquility and calmness, non-attachment with and indifference towards anything and anyone in this world, diversion of the mind from the sensual pleasures and charming objects of the materialistic world, no expectation of any reward from any deed done or action taken, and a sense of exemplary renunciation—all these are the various ‘Niyams’ to be followed by the seekers of true knowledge of the Atma (4).”]

प्राप्य चान्ते ततश्चैव ज्ञानयोगमनुत्तमम् । अविरोधेन धर्मस्य संचरेत्पृथिवीमिमाम् ॥३१॥

prāpya cānte tataścaiva jñānayogamanuttamam /  
avirodhena dharmasya saṁcaretpṛthivīmimām // 31 //

31. At the end of this period of one year it is expected that he would have proper Gyan or knowledge for which he had come to the Guru.

Thereafter, exercising great self control and observing all the laws of auspicious conduct that are expected from a spiritually elevated man, he should move around on the earth (31).

ततः संवत्सरस्यान्ते ज्ञानयोगमनुत्तमम् । आश्रमत्रयमुत्सृज्य प्राप्तश्च परमाश्रमम् ॥३२॥

tataḥ saṁvatsarasyānte jñānayogamanuttamam /  
āśramatrayamutsṛjya prāptaśca paramāśramam // 32 //

32. At the end of the period of one year when his education is complete, he should enter the next phase of life (as a householder or a Grihastha) and complete all the three phases as described by tradition and scriptures before he accepts the vows of Sanyas which marks the best phase of his life and indicates his exalted spiritual stature. [The three phases referred to here are Brahmacharya or the life of a celibate student, Grihastha or the life of a householder, and Vaanprastha or when he leaves the house and heads for the forest by renouncing all his attachments with the world. These have been outlined in Canto 1, verse no. 2.] (32).

अनुज्ञाप्य गुरुंश्चैव चरेद्धि पृथिवीमिमाम् । त्यक्तसङ्गो जितक्रोधो लघ्वाहारो जितेन्द्रियः ॥३३॥

anujñāpya gurūṁścaiva careddhi pṛthivīmimām /  
tyaktasaṅgo jitaḥkrodho laghvāhāro jitendriyaḥ // 33 //

33. After having served his Guru and gained his blessings, the aspirant can roam on the face of the earth with great respect. He must abandon all company and all forms of

anger, eat frugal meals with great moderation, and exercise strict control over all his sense organs (33).

द्वाविमौ न विरज्येते विपरीतेन कर्मणा । निरारम्भो गृहस्थश्च कार्यवाञ्छैव भिक्षुकः ॥३४॥

dvāvimau na virajyete viparītena karmaṇā /  
nirārambho gr̥hasthaśca kāryavāṁścaiva bhikṣukaḥ // 34 //

34. A householder who does deeds selflessly without expecting any worldly rewards from them, or does them as they come along without any hopes and expectations of getting any fruits for his labour, or starts to do any deed and take any action without having any kind of worldly desires to motivate such deeds or actions or have a vested interest in doing them, and a Sanyasi who diligently follows the tenets of conduct prescribed for him (as a man who has renounced all connections with this material world and who is expected to lead an exemplary life of total renunciation, dispassion and detachment, preparing himself for spiritual emancipation and salvation as well as realising the great Truth of existence)—both acquire glory and fame, both are respected and shown honour only as long as they adhere to their respective ways of life as sanctioned by tradition and scriptures. If they violate them, if they pretend to be righteous and noble and followers of sanctioned path and way of life while actually being to the contrary, they only get ignominy and ill-fame, they are reproached and ridiculed in the society (34).

माद्यति प्रमदां दृष्ट्वा सुरां पीत्वा च माद्यति । तस्माद्दृष्टिविषां नारीं दूरतः परिवर्जयेत् ॥३५॥

mādyati pramadāṁ dr̥ṣṭvā surāṁ pītvā ca mādyati /  
tasmāddr̥ṣṭiviṣaṁ nārīm dūrataḥ parivarjayet // 35 //

35. A man gets intoxicated by drinking wine, but the mere sight of a beautiful and voluptuous young lady makes him lustful and passionate. Therefore, a Parivrajak Sanyasi must abandon even the sight of a lady—who has the potential of causing a poison-like influence upon the Sanyasi by her mere sight—from a great distance (35).

संभाषणं सह स्त्रीभिरालापः प्रेक्षणं तथा । नृत्तं गानं सहासं च परिवादांश्च वर्जयेत् ॥३६॥

sambhāṣaṇaṁ saha strībhirālāpaḥ prekṣaṇaṁ tathā /  
nṛttaṁ gānaṁ sahāsaṁ ca parivādāṁśca varjayet // 36 //

36. A Sanyasi must guard himself against the urge for talking with a woman, or even thinking about her or sending her messages. He must not participate in dance, singing or such merry-making exercises. Likewise, he must also avoid getting engaged in jokes, jest, fun, merriment and laughter. [These things are prohibited for him—“varjayet”.] (36).

[Note—In the context of verse nos. 35-36 herein above, refer also to Canto 3, verse no. 64, and Canto 4, verse nos. 3-4, 25-29.]

न स्नानं न जपः पूजा न होमो नैव साधनम् । नाग्निकार्यादिकार्यं च नैतस्यास्तीह नारद ॥३७॥

na snānaṃ na japaḥ pūjā na homo naiva sādhanam /  
nāgnikāryādikāryaṃ ca naitasyāstīha nārada // 37 //

37. Oh Narad! A Sanyasi is not supposed to observe formal rituals and worship formalities such as purification bath (ablution), worship of deities, Japa (repetition of Mantras, especially those that pertain to these deities and are an inseparable part of ritualistic worship), Yagya (religious ceremonies, specially fire sacrifices) and its related rites and rituals, and other such formal forms of worship (37).

[Note—Refer also to verse no. 7 of the present Canto 6.]

नार्चनं पितृकार्यं च तीर्थयात्रा व्रतानि च । धर्माधर्मादिकं नास्ति न विधिलौकिकी क्रिया ॥३८॥

nārcaṇaṃ pitṛkāryaṃ ca tīrthayātrā vratāni ca /  
dharmādharmādikaṃ nāsti na vidhirlaukikī kriyā // 38 //

38. For him, even offering libations and oblations to the spirits of dead ancestors (called Pittars) is prohibited. [Refer verse no. 42.]

Similarly, he is forbidden to go on pilgrimage, observe religious fasting and other vows, and generally be obsessed about doing things to conform to the established norms of correct behaviour in this world. Rather, he must keep a safe distance from such things and not be bothered about any formalities and set norms of the world, because he is not only supposed to have broken all his links with this world but also because he has risen much above such mundane considerations and notions of what is holy, auspicious and good to do and what is not, what is religious and what is not, as he has become enlightened and truly aware of the ‘truth’ of creation that is known as the Atma and Brahm. [That is, he understands that his spiritual liberation and deliverance as well as emancipation and salvation does not depend at all on formal forms of worship and ritualistic practices. He realises that worshipping this or that deity, or offering oblations and libations to this and that spirit, or taking a formal bath to clean himself, or doing fire sacrifices or Japa, or observing the niceties of behaviour and etiquette in this world has no bearing on his spiritual enhancement and progress. This happens when the aspirant has become truly self-realised and Brahm-realised. And this achievement of self and Brahm realisation is the main criterion for a man to become truthful Sanyasi. If this does not happen, then he is an impostor.] (38).

[Note—This prohibition of worship of idols made of material things such as wood, stone, metals and clay etc. or other symbols of worship, or for that matter any kind of external worship such as going to pilgrim sites, rituals, fasting etc. is expressly mentioned in the following Upanishads—

(i) Sam Veda tradition—Maitreyu-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 21, 26; Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 50-59; and Sanyaso-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 74-75, 97.

(ii) Atharva Veda tradition—Devi Upanishad, verse nos. 29-30; Narad-Parivrajak Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 75, Canto 5, verse no. 20, Canto 6, verse nos. 7, 37-38, 42, and Canto 7, verse no. 1; Atharvashir Upanishad, Kandika (Canto) 4..

(iii) Krishna Yajur Veda’s following Upanishads—Pran Agnihotra Upanishad; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 69, 74; Canto 3, verse no. 26, 29-30; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 21-24.

(iv) Shukla Yajur Veda tradition—Advai Tarak Upanishad, verse nos. 5, 10, 13.]

संत्यजेत्सर्वकर्माणि लोकाचारं च सर्वशः । कृमिकीटपतङ्गांश्च तथा योगी वनस्पतीन् ॥३९॥

santyajetsarvakarmāṇi lokācāraṃ ca sarvaśaḥ /  
kṛmīkīṭapataṅgāśca tathā yogī vanaspatīn // 39 //

39. A true Yogi (ascetic) must discard all formalities and behaviours that are associated with this world. He must divert his mind and effort to spiritualism and achieving the 'truth' in life; he must strive to attain emancipation and salvation; he must endeavour to obtain the best goal in life.

He must not do anything that would harm even the humblest of creatures, whether mobile or immobile, such as worms and insects, and even the plants (because they too have life)<sup>1</sup> (39).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Refer Canto 3, verse no. 22; Canto 5, verse no. 43.]

न नाशयेद्बुधो जीवान्परमार्थमतिर्यतिः । नित्यमन्तर्मुखः स्वच्छः प्रशान्तात्मा स्वपूर्णधीः ॥४०॥

na nāśayedbudho jīvanparamārthamatiryaṭiḥ /  
nityamantarmukhaḥ svacchaḥ praśāntātmā svapūrṇadhīḥ // 40 //

40. He must always remain focused on his inner self (instead of being extrovert). He must always keep himself clean and untainted, both externally as well as internally, both physically and symbolically.

He must observe absolute internal peace, calmness and poise, and keep his mind and intellect completely soaked in the bliss obtained by realisation of the Atma (pure consciousness) (40).

[Note—Refer Canto 3, verse no. 55.]

अन्तःसङ्गपरित्यागी लोके विहर नारद । नाराजके जनपदे चरत्येकचरो मुनिः ॥४१॥

antaḥsaṅgaparityāgī loke vihara nārada /  
nārājake janapade caratyekacaro muniḥ // 41 //

41. Oh Narad! You must abandon all sorts and hues of attractions, attachments, endearments, affections and involvements vis-à-vis this world, and then wander in it with no such fetters to shackle you down.

A Sanyasi should not move alone in any such place where there is strife, civil unrest or any other kind of disorder, lawlessness and anarchy (41).

निःस्तुतिर्निर्ममस्कारो निःस्वधाकार एव च । चलाचलनिकेतश्च यतिर्यादृच्छिको भवेत् । इत्युपनिषत् ।  
॥४२॥

niḥstutirnirnamaskāro niḥsvadhākāra eva ca /  
calācalaniketaścayatiryādṛcchiko bhavet / ityupaniṣat // 42 //

42. A Sanyasi must keep far away from praises and honours as well as being shown respect by others as represented by such gestures as bowing before him. [Refer verse no. 20 of the present Canto 6.]

He must always keep away from doing Shraadh and Tarpan (offering libations and oblations to the spirit of dead ancestors—refer verse no. 38 of the present Canto 6.).

He should stay in some lonely place, such as abandoned house or the cave of a mountain. [Refer verse no. 6 of the present Canto 6.]

He must roam freely without any fetters of any kind binding him in any manner. [Refer verse no. 41 of the present Canto 6.]

(42).

Verily, this is what this great Upanishad says.

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#### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 7

[This Canto continues with the narration of the general rules adjured to be followed by a Sanyasi. New ideas are incorporated and necessary instructions given to him to enable him to succeed in his life of Sanyas as envisioned by the Upanishads. This Canto outlines the way of life that would help the Sanyasi reach his goal of self-realisation, and provides him the means by which such a self-realised Sanyasi can find deliverance from the cycle of birth and death.]

### ॥ सप्तमोपदेशः ॥

अथ यतेर्नियम् कथमिति पृष्ठं नारदं पितामहः पुरस्कृत्य विरक्तः सन्यो वर्षासु ध्रुवशीलोऽष्टौ मास्येकाकी चरन्नैकत्र निवसेद्धिक्षुर्भयात्सारङ्गवदेकत्र न तिष्ठेत्स्वगमननिरोधग्रहणं न कुर्याद्धस्ताभ्यां नद्युत्तरणं न कुर्यान्न वृक्षारोहणमपि न देवोत्सवदर्शनं कुर्यान्नैकत्राशी न बाह्यदेवार्चनं कुर्यात्स्वव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वं त्यक्त्वा मधुकरवृत्त्याहारमाहरन्कृशो भूत्वा मेदोवृद्धिमकुर्वन्नाज्यं रुधिरमिव त्यजेदेकत्रान्नं पललमिव गन्धलेपनमशुद्धिलेपनमिव क्षारमन्त्यजमिव वस्त्रमुच्छिष्टपात्रमिवाभ्यङ्गं स्त्रीसङ्गमिव मित्राह्लादकं मूत्रमिव स्पृहां गोमांसमिव ज्ञातचरदेशं चण्डालवाटिकामिव स्त्रियमहिमिव सुवर्णं कालकूटमिव सभास्थलं श्मशानस्थलमिव राजधानीं कुम्भीपाकमिव शवपिण्डवदेकत्रान्नं न देहान्तरदर्शनं प्रपञ्चवृत्तिं परित्यज्य स्वदेशमुत्सृज्य ज्ञातचरदेशं विहाय विस्मृतपदार्थं पुनः प्राप्तहर्षं इव स्वमानन्दमनुस्मरन्स्वशरीराभिमानदेशविस्मरणं मत्वा स्वशरीरं शवमिव हेयमुपगम्य कारागृहविनिर्मुक्तचोरवत्पुत्राप्तबन्धुभवस्थलं विहाय दूरतो वसेत् ॥ अयत्नेन प्राप्तमाहरन्ब्रह्मप्रणवध्यानानुसन्धानपरो भूत्वा सर्वकर्मनिर्मुक्तः कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यादिकं दग्ध्वा

त्रिगुणातीतः षडूर्मिरहितः षड्भावविकारशून्यः सत्यवाक् शुचिरद्रोही ग्रामैकरात्रं पत्तने पञ्चरात्रं क्षेत्रे पञ्चरात्रं तीर्थे पञ्चरात्रमनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्नानृतवादी गिरिकन्द्रेषु वसेदेक एव द्वौ वा चरेत् ग्रामं त्रिभिर्नगरं चतुर्भिर्ग्रामित्येकश्चरेत् । भिक्षुश्चतुर्दशकरणानां न तत्रावकाशं दद्यादविच्छिन्नज्ञानाद्वैराग्यसंपत्तिमनुभूय मत्तो न कश्चिन्नान्यो व्यतिरिक्त इत्यात्मन्यालोच्य सर्वतः स्वरूपमेव पश्यञ्जीवन्मुक्तिमवाप्य प्रारब्धप्रतिभासनाशपर्यन्तं चतुर्विधं स्वरूपं ज्ञात्वा देहपतनपर्यन्तं स्वरूपानुसंधानेन वसेत् ॥१॥

atha yaterniyamaḥ kathamiti prṣṭaṁ nāradaṁ pitāmahaḥ  
 puraskṛtya viraktaḥ sanyo varṣāsu dhruvaśīlo'sṭau  
 māsyekākī carannekatra nivasedbhikṣurbhayātsāraṅgavadekatra  
 na tiṣṭhesvagamananirodhagrahaṇaṁ na kuryāddhastābhyāṁ  
 nadyuttaraṇaṁ na kuryānna vṛkṣārohaṇamapi na  
 devotsavadarśanaṁ kuryānnaikatrāśī na bāhyadevārcaṇaṁ  
 kuryātsvavyatiriktaṁ sarvaṁ tyaktvā madhukaravṛttyāhāramahārakṛśo  
 bhūtvā medovṛddhimakurvannājyaṁ rudhiramiva tyajedekatrānnaṁ  
 palalamiva gandhalepanamaśuddhilepanamaiva kṣāramantyajamiva  
 vastramucchiṣṭapātramivābhyāṅgaṁ strīsaṅgamiva  
 mitrāhlādaṁ mūtramiva sprḥāṁ gomāṁsamiva jñātacaradeśaṁ  
 caṇḍālavāṭikāmiva striyamahimiva suvarṇaṁ kālakūṭamiva  
 sabhāsthalaṁ smaśānasthalaṁ rājadhāniṁ kumbhīpākamiva  
 śavapiṇḍavadekatrānnaṁ na dehāntaradarśanaṁ prapañcavṛttim  
 parityajya svadeśamutsrjya jñātacaradeśaṁ vihāya  
 vismṛtapadārthaṁ punaḥ prāptaharṣa iva svamānandamanusmara  
 nsvaśarīrābhīmānadeśavismaraṇaṁ matvā śavamiva heyamupagamya  
 kārāgrhavinirmuktacoravatputrāptabandhubhavasthalaṁ  
 vihāya dūrato vaset /  
 ayatnena prāptamāharanbrahmapraṇavadhyānānusandhānaparo  
 bhūtvā sarvakarmanirmuktaḥ kāmakrodhalobhamohamada mātsaryādikam  
 dagdhvā triguṇātītaḥ ṣaḍūrmirahitaḥ ṣaḍbhāvavikāraśūnyaḥ  
 satyavākchuciradrohī grāma ekarātraṁ pattane pañcarātraṁ kṣetre  
 pañcarātraṁ tīrthe pañcarātramaniketaḥ sthīramatirnanṛtavādī girikandareṣu  
 vasedeka eva dvau vā caret grāmaṁ tribhīrnagaraṁ  
 caturbhirgrāmamityekaścaret /  
 bhikṣuścaturdaśakaraṇānāṁ na tatrāvākāśaṁ  
 dadyādvicchinnañjñānādvairāgyasampatti  
 manubhūya matto na kaścinnānyo vyatirikta ityātmanyālocya sarvataḥ  
 svarūpameva paśyañjīvanmuktimavāpya  
 prārabdhapratibhāsanāśaparyantaṁ caturvidhaṁ svarūpaṁ jñātvā  
 dehapatanaparyantaṁ svarūpānusandhānena vaset // 1 //

1. Once again, sage Narad asked the great grandfather of creation, Brahma—‘Oh Lord! What are the rules that are to be followed by a Sanyasi?’

Brahma reflected upon his query and replied—‘Oh Narad! A Sanyasi must renounce all attachments with or attractions for this world. He should stay at one place only during the four months of the rainy season, and spend the rest eight months of the year wandering alone at different places. He must not stay at one place for any length of time, because if he does so there is always the fear of his falling prey to

temptations, development attachments and generally getting astray from his chosen path of Sanyas. [Refer Canto 4, verse nos. 14, 16, 19 and 20.]

Like a black bee, he must not stay at any one place for any length of time. [The bee moves from one flower to another in its search for nectar. It never visits any one flower twice. Similarly, a Sanyasi should never visit a particular household twice for food.]

If anyone objects to his going away then he must not pay heed to it and go his way. [For instance, if some devotee or follower is sufficiently influenced by his spiritual achievements that he requests him to stay in some temple or monastery on a permanent basis, a true Sanyasi must not agree and instead move out voluntarily for his wanderings.]

He must not cross a river by swimming. He must not climb a tree. [Refer Canto 5, verse no. 21.]

He must not see or attend any festivals associated with the worship of any God. [Refer Canto 5, verse no. 20, Canto 6, verse nos. 7, 37-38.]

He must not accept food from a single household often.

He must not worship other Gods and deities except the pure conscious Atma which is the microcosmic counterpart of the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. He must abandon everything except the Atma.

He must accept food by begging only. [Refer Canto 5, verse no. 60.]

He should keep his body humble and docile. [That is, he must be overly worried about keeping his body well built, handsome, strong, robust and muscular. Because such an attempt would necessitate its proper care, nourishment with rich and nutritious food, and rest which a Sanyasi can ill afford during his wanderings. But this does not mean that he should completely neglect it because it has also been said in the Upanishad that this body is the residence of the Atma and the Pran, and a Sanyasi must eat enough to sustain it till the time comes for him to leave it in a natural way. [Refer Canto 5, verse no. 26.]

He must ensure that he does not become obese. [This is because he has to remain alone and do everything himself. He has even to go out to fetch food for himself and remain constantly on the move. Being obese would be a great practical nuisance to him and cause a hindrance to his nomadic way of life of constant wanderings. A fat man finds it impossible to lead a life of wandering constantly. Besides, being fat would make him lazy and lethargic as well as susceptible to a number of diseases.]

Therefore, he must treat butter as being equivalent to blood, and absolutely abhor it (i.e. he must abstain from all food that are rich in fat, or would make him obese).

He must leave the food that is received repeatedly (more than once) from the same house as being equivalent to meat. [This restriction or prohibition would help him to guard himself against being attached to or attracted by any particular household and developing even a rudimentary form of bond with it. This is a distinct possibility because the Sanyasi might prefer to reach a certain house at a certain time in the certain hope of finding food without having to take the trouble of going from one house to another in its search. But this type of acceptance of food from one single household is not 'begging'; it is sort of remaining a householder from a distance! By and by, there is a sure danger of bonds developing between the Sanyasi and the members of the house where he goes regularly for food. This is to be avoided by him at all costs.]

He must also reject perfumes and paste of the sandalwood which is used as a smear on the body, and treat them as being equivalent to stinking urine and foul stool respectively.

He must treat caustic soda (used as an ingredient in washing soaps and powders) as being equivalent to contact with a Chandala (a very low caste man who lives outside villages and generally engaged in burning dead bodies in the cremation ground), and therefore keep himself away from having anything to do with it. [In other words, he must avoid using any soap or other forms of artificial scrubbing and cleaning material to clean his body or wash his clothes.]

He must discard all other things (clothes) except the loin-cloth, called the Kaupin, and the one-piece cloth used to cover his body, called the Kantha, by treating the rest as untouchable things.

Treating massage of the body with oil as being equivalent to an embrace of a woman, he must permanently keep himself away from it. [That is, he must learn to practice stern self-restraint, shun the desire to pamper the body and attend to its wish for gratification. This self-restraint is like a Tapa for him—i.e. it is equivalent to doing severe penances and austerities.]

He must treat company of friends and its associated pleasures and enjoyments as being equivalent to urine, and therefore shun it.

He must treat any desire for obtaining anything that may arise in his heart and mind as being similar to the desire for beef, and hence must absolutely abhor such an idea.

Well known places or those that were frequented by him earlier in life must be regarded as being equivalent to the garden frequented by a Chandala (a low caste man who has the vocation of burning dead bodies in the cremation ground), and hence should be avoided at all costs.

He must abandon gold (or any physical worldly asset) as being equivalent to the horrible poison called Kaalkuta, a place where people gather to attend community functions as being like the cremation ground, the capital city (or any large city) as the greatest of hell known as Kumbhipaaka, and food got repeatedly from a single place as corresponding to the Pinda (ball of cooked cereals) that is offered to dead ancestors.

He must understand that the Atma, which is the pure consciousness, is separate from the gross body. And therefore he must never allow himself to be trapped in numerous and varied addictions and different inclinations and tendencies of the mind (because they are all related to the body and have nothing to do with the Atma which is his true self).

He should ensure that he leaves his country (native place) and place of normal habitat (such as his village, town, city etc. where he had lived as a householder), and move out to some unknown destination.

Thinking about and experiencing the blissful and happy nature of his primary form (which is his pure conscious Atma) that is endowed with these eclectic divine qualities, he must feel exhilarated and ecstatic as if he has discovered some precious treasure long forgotten or lost.

Going to a place that arouses ego and pride about one's own self and one's body (i.e. about the achievements and successes that one had accomplished with his body and its abilities, strengths, powers and vitality), as well as a place where people related to the body live (such as one's family members, kith and kin)—a Sanyasi must forget about such a place for good.

He must treat his own body as dead and never have any attachment with or endearment for it.



Even as a convict (such as a thief) released from prison never goes back to his native place out of shame and ridicule by the society, as well as out of the fear of castigation, censor and ignominy, a Parivrajak should leave the place where his family members, his kith and kin or his elders live, and go to some unknown place far away.

He must accept whatever food that is available, without making any special efforts, to sustain himself.

Remaining absorbed in meditation and submerged in hearing of the reverberation of the divine sound OM, which is a reflection of the supreme Brahman, vibrating constantly in his inner self, he must free himself from the need to undertake all other deeds and activities related to this mundane world.

He must burn (destroy or eliminate) all negative traits such as Kaam (worldly passions, lust, desires and yearnings), Krodh (anger and wrath), Lobh (greed, rapacity), Moha (affections, attractions, attachments and endearments), Mada (arrogance, haughtiness and hypocrisy), Matsarya (jealously, ill-will, malice) etc., and even go beyond the influence of the three Gunas (which are basic qualities that are inherent in all living beings and which manipulate a man's personality) called Sata, Raja and Tama. [That is, he must clean his inner self of all kinds of traits, whether they are good or bad or mediocre, and instead learn and practice to become totally neutral and dispassionate. Briefly, the Sata Guna is the noblest quality that inclines a man towards doing and thinking noble deeds, the Raja Guna is the medium quality that arouses the desire to create and maintain this world, and the Tama Guna which creates negativity such as sinfulness and perversions. Refer Canto 3, verse no. 90.]

The six types of Urmis such as hunger, thirst etc. should have no affect on the Sanyasi. [Refer also Canto 3, verse no. 90. According to Mudgala-panishad, 4/7 of the Rig Veda tradition, the six delusions, called 'Urmi', that create fear, sorrows, agonies, sufferings and pains to a creature are the following:--(1) hunger, (2) thirst, (3) grief, (4) Moha (worldly attachments, illusions, entrapments), (5) horrors of old age, and (6) death.]

He must have also no connection with the six Vikars or faults or imperfections of the mind that are the source of constant worry and consternation for the creature. [The 6 Vikars or faults or shortcomings or imperfections of the body are the problems associated with this gross world that has a physical origin, takes a birth and ultimately ends or dies. Naturally they are not applicable to the supreme Lord who does not take birth and does not die. These so-called 'Vikars' are the following—(1) problems associated with birth, (2) problems associated with growth, (3) problems associated with consequences of deeds done and actions taken by a creature in this world, (4) problems associated with gradual decay and decline of the body and its functions, (5) problems associated with old age and its attendant horrors, and (6) problems associated with the ultimate destruction and end of everything that relates to the creature. One will observe that the life of a creature is a continuous graph of sorrows, sufferings and pains of one or the other kind. It is only when the creature realises the truth of existence and who he really is that he begins to disassociate himself from the body and the world, and thus is able to break free from this seemingly interminable cycle of horrors. Refer Canto 3, verse no. 90, and Canto 4, verse nos. 5-6 of the present Upanishad, besides the following—Mudgal Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 6-7 of Rig Veda tradition, and Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 1 verse nos. 8-9 of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition. The Adhyatma Ramayan of Veda Vyas, Lanka Kand, Canto 3, verse no. 29 also asserts similar views.]

He must always speak the truth, remain immaculate and pure by his mind and body, and have no malice or animosity with anyone.

He must not stay in one village for more than one night, in a town for more than five nights, in some religious place (such as a temple or other place where some religious ceremony had taken place) for more than five nights, and in a pilgrim site also for not more than five nights. [Refer Canto 4, verse no. 14-16, 19.]

A Parivrajak Sanyasi must not construct a permanent dwelling for himself at any place. [By extension, he should not stay even in a monastery permanently. Refer Canto 3, verse no. 90.]

The mind must constantly be focused on the thoughts of the Supreme Being.

He must never tell a lie under any situation.

He should make his habitat in the caves of mountains. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 90; Canto 4, verse no. 38.]

He must roam all alone without keeping any company. [Refer Canto 2, verse no. 1; Canto 3, verse nos. 31, 54-56, 59-60, 76, 90; Canto 4, verse nos. 23, 38; Canto 5, verse no. 52; Canto 6, verse nos. 6, 41.]

It is however sanctioned that he might have a company of four people during the four months of the rainy season. To have constant company of three people would be like being in a village, and a company of four people creates an environment symbolic of a town. Hence, a Sanyasi is best advised to remain alone and avoid company of all sorts. [Refer Canto 3, verse no. 56.]

The fourteen components of the body (as outlined in Canto 6, verse no. 3) should not be allowed and given the time to act independently and without restraint. [That is, a Sanyasi must exercise the greatest of vigil on their activities, being aware that they are like horses yoked to a chariot that require being properly harnessed, reined-in and controlled, as otherwise they would wreck the chariot and kill the passenger. The chariot in this case is the man's own body, and the passenger is the 'self'. Since controlling of the body and its sense organs can only be done by the will of the mind and an involvement of the heart, collectively called the Mana, the 'charioteer' in this instance would therefore be the 'Mana'.]

A Sanyasi must be so highly enlightened and self-realised that he would not recognise or give any importance to any entity other than the 'self' which is the pure conscious Atma.

Without giving any credence to any other entity or thing other than his own Atma as being the only 'truth' in existence, he must look at everything in this world in the light of this realisation. That is, he must strive to peek behind the external façade of things and attempt to see the truth hidden behind this façade and inside that thing.

Experiencing the eclectic and blissful nature of his Atma, he must find freedom from all miseries and pain of this world as well as find liberation from all the delusions and their attendant confusions about the truth and reality of existence even while he is still alive. [This spiritual achievement is called 'Jivan Mukti'—to be liberated from all spiritual fetters arising out of ignorance of the 'truth and reality' even while a man still lives in this world and has a physical body, as compared to finding freedom from this world after he has shed the bondage and limitations of the physical gross body that is possible only upon death.]

Once a Sanyasi has become 'self-realised', i.e. once he has understood the truthful and sublime nature of his Atma, the pure consciousness that lives inside the gross body as the person's truthful identity, he must remain self-contained and self-contented, bidding his time when he would be able to shed his mortal coil (his physical gross body) effortlessly and find eternal freedom from all physical bondages, shackles and limitations that had been inhibiting him through generations of birth and death.

It is a moral obligation on the part of the Parivrajak Sanyasi that he leaves his mortal body while remaining submerged in the eclectic thoughts of the Atma. [This would ensure that he does not feel the pain of death. In this context, refer also to Canto 3, verse nos. 60-61 of the present Upanishad.] (1).

त्रिषवणस्नानं कुटीचकस्य बहूदकस्य द्विवारं हंसस्यैकवारं परमहंसस्य मानसस्नानं तुरीयातीतस्य भस्मास्नानमवधूतस्य वायव्यस्नानम् ॥२॥

triṣavaṇasnānaṃ kuṭīcakasya bahūdakasya dvivāraṃ  
haṃsasyaikavāraṃ paramahaṃsasya mānasasnānaṃ  
turīyātītasya bhasmasnānamavadhūtasya vāyavyasnānaṃ // 2 //

2. [In the context of verse nos. 2-11, the reader should also refer to Canto 5, verse nos. 12-21.]

A Kutichak Sanyasi is ordained to take bath three times a day (at dawn, at noon and at dusk).

A Bahudak Sanyasi should take bath twice a day (at dawn and dusk).

A Hans Sanyasi should take bath only once a day (preferably at dawn).

A Param-hans Sanyasi should take only a symbolic form of bath mentally.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi is prescribed a bath in the form of rubbing or smearing of the sacred ash of the fire sacrifice over his body. This is called ‘Bhasma Snan’—bathing with the ash.

An Avadhut Sanyasi is prescribed the ‘Vaayabya Snan’—i.e. bathing with air. That is, he must inculcate the eclectic view that the air which touches his body is cleaning the latter like physical contact with water does. This symbolic bathing with air keeps him always clean because bathing with water keeps the body clean only for some limited time but bathing with air keeps it permanently cleaned as the body is in constant contact with air. Therefore, he need not take a bath with water (2).

ऊर्ध्वपुण्ड्रं कुटीचकस्य त्रिपुण्ड्रं बहूदकस्य ऊर्ध्वपुण्ड्रं त्रिपुण्ड्रं हंसस्य भस्मोद्धूलनं परमहंसस्य तुरीयातीतस्य तिलकपुण्ड्रमवधूतस्य न किञ्चित् । तुरीयातीतावधूतयोः ॥३॥

ūrdhvapauṇḍraṃ kuṭīcakasya tripauṇḍraṃ bahūdakasya  
ūrdhvapauṇḍraṃ tripauṇḍraṃ haṃsasya bhasmoddhūlanaṃ  
paramahaṃsasya turīyātītasya tilakapauṇḍramavadhūtasya na kiñcit /  
turīyātītāvadhūtayoh // 3 //

3. A Kutichak Sanyasi should wear the vertical mark of the Urdhva-pundra<sup>1</sup> on his forehead.

A Bahudak Sanyasi should wear the Tripundra<sup>2</sup>.

A Hans Sanyasi can wear either the Urdhva-pundra or the Tripundra.

A Param-hans Sanyasi should wear only the Bhasma<sup>3</sup>.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi should wear the mark called Tilak-pundra<sup>4</sup>.

An Avadhut Sanyasi is not prescribed to sport any specific sign (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Urdhva-pundra—The word ‘Urdhva’ means vertical or one that moves upwards. The Urdhva-pundra is a vertical line or mark made on the forehead.

<sup>2</sup>Tripundra—References: Krishna Yajur Veda's Kalgnirudra Upanishad; Atharva Veda's Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman (Canto) 4, verse nos. 9-36, Brahman 5, verse nos. 1-19, and Brahman 7.

The word Tripundra has two parts—'tri' and 'pundra'. Tri means three while the word Pundra refers to the three horizontal lines marked on the body (the forehead, the chest and the shoulders) by Hindus. The Pundra can be horizontal or crosswise lines, in which case it is called the 'Tiryak Pundra', or it can be vertical or upright lines, in which case it is called 'Urdhva Pundra'. The Triyak Pundra or Tripundra is worn by devotees of Lord Shiva and initiated ascetics and is marked by the paste of the ash obtained from the pit of the fire sacrifice by mixing it with water.

The three lines of the Tripundra have great symbolic significance. They stand for the entire gamut of creation having three aspects or dimensions. It is like a sign depicting a three dimensional picture of this creation. The Brihajjabal Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Brahman 4-5 describes in great detail the spiritual importance of this Tripundra and how to wear it on the body. It represents the Trinity Gods, i.e. Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and protector, and Rudra the concluder (Brahman 4, verse no.10), the three Gunas such as the Sata Guna, the Raja Guna and the Tama Guna, and the three sacred fires such as the Ahawaniya fire, the Grahapatya fire and the Dakshinagni fire (Brahman 4, verse no. 36).

The metaphysical and spiritual importance and significance of the Tripundra have been asked by sage Sanatkumar from Lord Kalagni Rudra and explained by the Lord in Kalagni Rudra Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.

<sup>3</sup>Bhasma— The word 'Bhasma' means ash, and it refers to the sacred ash left in the pit after the fire sacrifice is completed. The Brihajjabal and Bhasma Jabal Upanishads of the Atharva Veda describe the concept of Bhasma in great detail along with how to prepare it and its astounding mystical powers, metaphysical significance, spiritual authority and importance.

<sup>4</sup>The Tilak is the vertical holy mark made in the center of the forehead similar to the Urdhva-pundra. It is a single line that starts at the on the bridge of the nose and goes straight up to the hair line.]

ऋतुक्षौरं कुटीचकस्य ऋतुद्वयक्षौरं बहूदकस्य न क्षौरं हंसस्य परमहंसस्य च न क्षौरम् । अस्ति  
चेदयनक्षौरं तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्न क्षौरम् ॥४॥

ṛtukṣauram kuṭīcakasya ṛtadvayakṣauram bahūdakasya na kṣauram  
haṁsasya paramahaṁsasya ca na kṣauram /  
asticedayanakṣauram turīyātītāvadhūtayona kṣauram // 4 //

4. A Kutichak Sanyasi should shave off the hairs on his body every two months.

A Bahudak Sanyasi should do the same every four months.

A Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi can, if they so wish, shave off the hair every six months.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are not required to shave off the hair (4).

कुटीचकस्यैकात्रं माधूकरं बहूदकस्य हंसपरमहंसयोः करपात्रं तुरीयातीतस्य गोमुखं अवधूतस्याजगरवृत्तिः  
॥५॥

kuṭīcakasyaikānnaṁ mādhuḥkaram bahūdakasya haṁsaparamahaṁsayoḥ  
karapātram turīyātītasya gomukhaṁ avadhūtasya jagaravṛttiḥ // 5 //

5. A Kutichak Sanyasi should accept food from one place (household) only.

A Bahudak Sanyasi should accept food by begging only.

For a Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi the hands are the only pots to accept food. Such Sanayasis are called ‘Karpatri’—those whose hands are like a pot. [That is, they should not accept food in a separate pot but accept it directly in their hands by cupping the palms together.] He must be contented by whatever quantity of food that can be accommodated in their cupped hands.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi should eat like a cow—i.e. he should open his mouth and the giver puts food, consisting either of cooked meal or fruits, directly into his open mouth.

An Avadhut Sanyasi is to accept food like a python—i.e. he must not venture out in search of food but accept whatever is made available to him by the grace of God and as desired by others at the place where he stays. He must be fully contented with it (5).

शाटीद्वयं कुटीचकस्य बहूदकस्यैकशाटी हंसस्य खण्डं दिगम्बरं परमहंसस्य एककौपीनं वा  
तुरीयातीतावधूतयोजार्तरूपधरत्वं हंसपरमहंसयोरजिनं न त्वन्येषाम् ॥६॥

śāṭidvayaṃ kuṭīcakasya bahūdakasyaikaśāṭī haṃsasya khaṇḍaṃ  
digaṃbaram paramahaṃsasya ekakaupīnaṃ vā  
turiyātītāvadhūtayorjātarūpadharatvaṃ haṃsaparamahaṃsayorajinaṃ  
na tvanyeṣāṃ // 6 //

6. A Kutichak Sanyasi should keep two pieces of cloth with him. [Besides the loin-cloth he can keep two pieces of clothes—one to wrap his body with and one to spread on the ground when he rests.]

A Bahudak Sanyasi should keep only one long piece of cloth to wrap his body with.

A Hans Sanyasi should keep only one smaller piece of cloth as compared to the one kept by the Bhaudak.

A Param-hans Sanyasi should wear only the loin-cloth or remain completely naked.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are both required to remain naked (6).

कुटीचकबहूदकयोर्देवार्चनं हंसपरमहंसयोर्मनिसार्चनं तुरीयातीतावधूतयोः सोहंभावना ॥७॥

kuṭīcakabahūdakayordevārcanaṃ haṃsaparamahaṃsayormānasārcanaṃ  
turiyātītāvadhūtayoh sohaṃbhāvanā // 7 //

7. A Kutichak Sanyasi and a Bahudak Sanyasi can offer physical worship to God (or any deity of their choice), if they so wish<sup>1</sup>.

A Hans Sanyasi as well as a Param-hans Sanyasi should worship God mentally and not physically.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are required to have the eclectic view about Brahm that makes them firmly believe in the doctrine ‘So-aham’. That is,

they should realise the truth of the tenet ‘That Principal is me’, that they are Brahm personified, and therefore they need not worship any other God or deity except their own ‘self’ in the form of their pure conscious Atma (7).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>It ought to be noted here that all the Upanishads that deal with the concept of Sanyas, and even our present Naradparivrajak Upanishad have prohibited physical forms of deity worship for a Sanyasi—refer Canto 5, verse no. 20, Canto 6, verse no. 7, 37-38. So does this mean that there is contradiction in these verses? No, not at all. Now let us see why it is so.

A conscientious Hindu is taught to worship deities in a number of ways—as his family deity, as his business deity, as his personal deity, as his village and community deity etc. This he does willingly and as his religiously sanctioned duty while he is a householder. If he does not do so, he feels guilty of offending some God and fears the latter’s punishment in so many ways. Perhaps this was designed to build some kind of regulatory mechanism to make a man adhere to certain norms in life and regulate his deeds, action and behaviour, and to make him pursue a righteous and auspicious path as far as possible. But Vedanta or the Upanishad teach of only one deity, of only one God, of only one Truth, and it is the Consciousness known as the Atma at the individual or micro level of creation, and as Brahm at the larger cosmic or the macro level. A wise man, even when conforming to the tradition of worshipping so many deities, understands this basic tenet that he is worshipping only one single Divinity in all the forms he worships. A wise worshipper is he who knows that the same Divinity, the same divine Principal has manifested in myriad of forms and in countless of ways to make itself easily accessible and available to the individual creature depending upon his specific abilities, spiritual needs and mental calibre. In this, Hinduism has a democratic and all-inclusive broad perspective of and approach to religion, worship and Godhood. Every single individual has the liberty to choose and pick his personal deity that suits his emotional and mental setup the most, instead of being forced to follow some abstract deity which is thrust down his unwilling mind. This freedom makes him more committed and devoted to his personal deity of choice as he is inclined to believe in it more sincerely at the emotional level. This situation stands in stark contrast with a community deity with which a man might not be so emotionally attached, and hence his devotion is also diluted. No other religion gives its followers this freedom of choice—the liberty to choose a personal ‘God’ from a wide variety of choices. But it must be borne in mind that it is the same Hinduism which teaches its followers that no matter what form or shape this ‘God’ of his takes, the fact is that all of them are the same Divinity known as Brahm in each of their forms. In other words, one can be called a true worshipper of the Lord and a wise one if he worships any form but with this enlightened view.

So, this stanza gives the Kutichak Sanyasi the freedom to follow his line of worship because he would still reach his spiritual goal if he is wise and enlightened enough. But in practice, everyone is not so highly erudite and enlightened to grasp the facts and their fine nuances. And this ignorance leads to one’s downfall, which he squarely blames on the scriptures and the inefficacy of their teachings.

When a householder becomes a Sanyasi, he has his old habits, and if he is told to stop worshipping the deities that he is used to honouring he might wrongly interpret it as being a wrong or un-religious advice. So, in the initial stages of Sanyas such as the Kutichak and Bhahudak, he is allowed to carry on with his earlier habit or practice of offering worship in its external form to the Divinity. But as he progresses ahead in his spiritual awakening, he realises the futility of this form of worship, and then when he has graduated to the next level of Hans and Param-hans, he is required to chuck off this superficial form of external or formal forms of worship, and instead honour the Lord internally, which is actually the correct way of honouring the Supreme Being because the Lord does not require any external formalities, rituals, rites, pretensions of being religious and devout, and any other kind of showmanship to be honoured.

In the final stages of one's spiritual evolution, he realises the truth of the great sayings of the Upanishads and the Vedas, and understands that the supreme Truth that is the object of all religious exercises and offering of worship and honour is not to be found somewhere outside but it is hidden in his own bosom as his 'pure conscious self'. And this leads him to exclaim 'I am that universal principle, I am that truthful essence, I am the Atma that is Brahm personified'.]

कुटीचकबहूदकयोर्मन्त्रजपाधिकारो हंसपरमहंसयोर्ध्यानाधिकारस्तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्न  
त्वन्याधिकारस्तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्महावाक्योपदेशाधिकारः परमहंसस्यापि । कुटीचकबहूदकहंसानां  
नान्यस्योपदेशाधिकारः ॥८॥

kuṭīcakabahūdakayormantrajapādhikāro  
haṁsaparamahaṁsayordhyānādhikārasturiyātītāvadhūtayorna  
tvanyādhikārasturiyātītāvadhūtayormahāvākyopadeśādhikārah  
paramahaṁsasyāpi /  
kuṭīcakabahūdakahamsānāṁ nānyasyopadeśādhikārah// 8 //

8. A Kutichak Sanyasi and a Bahudak Sanyasi can do Japa (repetition) with Mantras. [They are supposed to use the OM Mantra for doing Japa.]

A Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi should do only Dhyan<sup>1</sup> or focus their mind in deep contemplation and meditation.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are required to research upon their Atma, which is pure and enlightened consciousness and a fountainhead of bliss, beatitude and felicity, and do nothing else. [In other words, they do meditation and contemplation like the Hans and the Param-hans Sanyasis, but they have advanced to a higher level as compared to their brethrens, the Hans and the Param-Hans Sanyasis. Their focus is on more deep penetration of the numerous layers that shroud the truth about the Atma rather than doing meditation and contemplation as a preparatory ground for self-realisation. In fact, there is not much of a difference between what is prescribed for a Turiyatit and Avadhut Sanyasi on the one hand, and for a Hans and a Param-Hans Sanyasi on the other hand as would be clear by the note appended below. It is actually two ways of saying the same thing. Only the degree and depth of concentration could vary, as can the method employed to carry out Dhyan. But the aim of the exercise in both the cases is to concentrate the faculties of the mind and the intellect to realise the 'ultimate Truth' about the 'self' which is known as the Atma, and which can provide the Sanyasi the way for his spiritual liberation and deliverance, for his spiritual emancipation and salvation.]

The three types of Sanyasis such as the Turiyatit, the Avadhut and the Param-hans are the only ones who have the authority to preach the great sayings or the Mahavakyas<sup>2</sup> of the scriptures such as 'Tattwamasi' (that essence and principle is you), 'Ayamaatma Brahm' (my Atma is Brahm) etc.

The other three types of Sanyasis such as the Kutichak, the Bahudak and the Hans are not authorised to preach the Mahavakyas (8).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Dhyan* literally means 'to think or to cogitate'. It is profound and abstract meditation that revolves around reflection and thoughts that are focused on the Divinity said to be concealed inside the bosom of all the creatures as their pure consciousness that in turn is the supreme cosmic power in creation known as Brahm. Usually the energy of this cosmic Consciousness is lying latent and unused in the own body of the creature simply because it is in a dormant form and un-ignited much

like the fire lying dormant in the firewood or charcoal and needing some prodding to leap back into life with all its glorious potentials and splendour. Dhyan envisages the concentration of the stupendous powers of the faculties of the mind to deeply contemplate and fixedly ponder on the great spiritual truths of creation as envisioned by the scriptures to unravel their enigmatic secrets. This is done by fixing the powerful forces of the mind which is aided by the physical contribution of the body in this auspicious endeavour in the form of various meditative exercises, onto a spot called the 'Bindu', literally the point source of spiritual energy located in the heart as the 'Atma or soul' of the creature, as also in the centre of the eyebrows as 'awareness and enlightenment', from where the great mystical powers in creation spring out and spread into the outside world. It envisions the use of various Yoga techniques to contemplate and meditate upon the various aspects of spiritualism with the objective of unfolding the magnificent treasure of spiritual enlightenment and unleashing of the astounding mystical powers that are inherently present in the Atma but tacitly concealed hitherto, leading to self and Brahm realisation, to the awakening of the universal powers of the Spirit.

Dhyan means both contemplation as well as meditation. The word also means 'attention; focus'. So this word is generally understood in common parlance to be similar to contemplation and meditation, concentration and focusing of the conscious mind. It covers both the terms in its ambit.

The appropriate word for contemplation in Sanskrit would be 'Manan and Chintan' which will roughly mean 'deep thought, reflection, pondering and application of mind'. The Upanishads stress on this 'Chintan-manan' aspect of the mind-intellect when it talks about 'Dhyan'. Greatest of scientific discoveries were made more by intuition than anything else. That is why intuition is closely related to the so-called 'sixth sense' in a man, i.e. a state when the intuitive man knows what is the correct path to chose from a variety of options, and more often than not, he is correct. We can say that this 'intuition' is the guidance provided by the subtle soul/Atma of the creature. Not everybody is equally intuitive by nature; this is because some persons, by virtue of their past actions and deeds have a thicker layer of Vasanas and Vrittis surrounding their Atma while others have a thinner layer so that the voice coming out of the Atma is easily heard in the latter case while it is muzzled and suppressed in the former case.

The great exponent of Yoga, sage Patanjali, in his magnum opus 'Yogsutra' has described 'Dhyan' as concentration. Dhyan is that state in which the inner mind tries to see the reality behind things. This 'thinking' process links it with contemplation while concentration function links it with meditation. According to Agni Puran, contemplation with a calm mind is Dhyan while Garud Puran has defined it as concentration on the Brahm. Dhyan, therefore, leads to enlightenment. Woodworth, in his book 'Psychology', writes that the mind concentrates on one impulse at a time and neglects others. So, Dhyan in this context means 'to become alert and activated for doing a work or seeing an object exclusively'. Dhyan is momentary in the beginning, but it becomes permanent later on with practice. Sidney Smith defines Dhyan as 'to forget everything else except the main objective'. Charles Dickens views Dhyan as 'useful, harmless, definite and a beneficial process of the mind'. According to Bergansa, 'suppression of external distractions is essential for the deepening expansion of Dhyan'. Edgar Casey says that 'Dhyan brings to the fore the latent powers of creativity in a person. This creativity improves and enriches his physical, mental and spiritual aspects'. John White in his renowned work 'The meeting of science and spirit' has enumerated many benefits of Dhyan— promotion of physical health, reduction of tension, anxiety and aggressiveness, it leads to self realisation and self improvement and development. He further says that the benefit of meditation are the following—feeling of tranquillity, freedom, reduction of tiredness and depression, relief from pains, increase in positive traits such as sympathy and empathy for others, believe in divinity and purity of self etc. Michael Murphy and



Steven Donovan, in their research work titled ‘The physical and psychological effects of meditation’ have mentioned that meditation/Dhyan helps to regulate and control electrical and chemical activity of the brain, the rhythm of the heart, regulates blood pressure, the skin’s ability to resist infection and it regulates general metabolism.

The great philosopher sage Sankaracharya has explained that the many Vedic rituals such as sacrifices had been transformed as mental concepts for contemplation and meditation by Chandogya Upanishad because any defect in the performance of a ritual according to the Vedas, however small and inconsequential, could devalue and derail the whole process. Further, elaborate rituals required huge preparation and expenditure. So he prescribed that meditation was far better, safer and surer means of attaining the same benefits that elaborate sacrifices offered. Contemplation and meditation are equally efficient in spiritual pursuit of the aspirant. Nevertheless, the former (contemplation) has intellect and mind as its main focus while the latter (meditation) concentrates on the mind and body to be effective. Sacrifices, as compared to them, are merely physical rituals.

As is evident, the chariot moves in the proper direction when all the horses are controlled simultaneously. So a holistic and an all-inclusive, well synchronised and homogenous approach is needed by a seeker/aspirant to attain success in his endeavour to get liberation and deliverance from the horrible torments agitating him as well as to attain emancipation and salvation for its soul from this world.

The concept of Dhyan has been described in detail in Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 7, section 6 and 18 of the Sam Veda tradition, and Dhyan Bindu Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition which is expressly dedicated to it.

Verse no. 1 of Dhyan Bindu Upanishad refers to the concept of Dhyan Yoga and gives its spiritual importance.

<sup>2</sup>There are a number of Upanishads that describe the *Mahavakyas*. A brief reference is as follows—

- (i) Rig Veda—Atmabodha Upanishad.
- (ii) Sam Veda—Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 6, section 16, verse no. 3 (Tattwamasi).
- (iii) Shukla Yajur Veda—Paingalo-panishad, Canto 3, verse no. 2-3, 8; Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, Brahman 2, section 2, verse no. 5; Brahman 2, section 4, verse no. 4; Brahman 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Brahman 3, section 2, verse no. 2; Adhyatma Upanishad, verse nos. 2, 10 (So-a-Ham), 30-31 (Tattwamasi).
- (iv) Krishna Yajur Veda—Shuk Rahasayo-panishad, verse no. 22; Kaivalya Upanishad, verse no. 16; Sarwasar Upanishad, verse no. 12-14; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 32, 37; Avadhut Upanishad, verse no. 2.
- (v) Atharva Veda— Atma Upanishad; Tripadvibhuta Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15 (‘So-a-Ham’); Canto 6, paragraph no. 22 (‘Twam Brahmasmi’; ‘Aham Brahmasmi’; ‘Twamewaaham’; ‘Ahamev Twam’); Canto 8, paragraph no. 5 (‘Brahmaasmi’ or I am Brahm; ‘Ahamasmi’ or Indeed it is I/me; ‘Brahmahamasmi’ or I am indeed Brahm; ‘Yoahamasmi’ or That is I/me; ‘Brahmaamashmi’ or Brahm is I/me; ‘Ahamevaaham’ or I am indeed I/me.); Ram Rahasya Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 13-14 (Tat Twam Asi—That Art Thou); Ram Uttar Tapaini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 9-10 (So-a-Ham); Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 8 (Brahmasmi—I am Brahm personified); Mahavakya Upanishad, verse nos. 6-8 (‘Hans So-a-Ham’); verse no. 11 (‘So-a-Hamarka’—that essence is me); Hayagriva Upanishad, verse no. 15 (‘Tattwamasi’—i.e. that supreme essence or truth is you; the second Maha-Vakya is ‘Ayamatma’—i.e. that essence known as Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, is my own Atma, my own ‘self’; the third Maha-Vakya is ‘Brahm Aham’—i.e. Brahm is me; the fourth Maha Vakya is ‘Aham Brahmasmi’—i.e. I am Brahm).]

कुटीचकबहूदकयोर्मानुषप्रणवः हंसपरमहंसयोरान्तरप्रणवः । तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्ब्रह्म प्रणवः ॥९॥

kuṭīcakabahūdakayormānuṣapraṇavaḥ  
haṁsaparamahaṁsayorāntarapraṇavaḥ /  
turiyātītāvadhūtayorbrahma praṇavaḥ // 9 //

9. A Kutichak Sanyasi and a Bahudak Sanyasi are prescribed to do meditation using the OM Mantra in its apparent or clear or audible form. That is, they can repeat the divine Mantra OM symbolising Brahm audibly, and use it openly for the purpose of doing Dhyān (concentration of the mind during meditation) and Japa (repetition of the Mantra).

A Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi on the other hand should use OM mentally as a means to do Dhyān, Japa and focusing of their attention on the supreme Brahm. That is, their meditation and contemplation is basically mental, done internally and imperceptibly, rather than by exhibiting any external signs of doing Yoga, Japa or Dhyān such as repeating OM aloud.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are expected to have become sufficiently enlightened that they directly visualise the supreme Brahm and experience the presence of the supreme transcendental Consciousness when using the Mantra OM, rather than treating it as only a symbol and representative of Brahm. [The difference between the Hans and Param-hans on the one hand, and the Turiyatit and Avadhut on the other hand is clear here. Whereas the former two classes of Sanyasis use the divine Mantra OM as a vehicle to realise Brahm, the latter class of Sanyasis directly view or experience Brahm whenever they hear or say OM.] (9).

[Note—Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 20, 26.]

कुटीचकबहूदकयोः श्रवणं हंसपरमहंसयोर्मननं तुरीयातीतावधूतयोर्निदिध्यासः । सर्वेषामात्मानुसन्धानं विधिरिति ॥१०॥

kuṭīcakabahūdakayoḥ śravaṇaṁ haṁsaparamahaṁsayormananaṁ  
turiyātītāvadhūtayornididhyāsaḥ /  
sarveṣāmātmanusandhānaṁ vidhiriti // 10 //

10. A Kutichak Sanyasi and a Bahudak Sanyasi are authorised to hear discourses on Vedānta to enhance their knowledge in spiritual matters. [This is because they are still in the preparatory and earlier stages of Sanyas. They hear discourses to clear doubts and acquire knowledge. As has been made abundantly clear in this Upanishad, all the categories of Sanyasis are basically advanced in spiritual matters as compared to other classes in society, but they still have a lot to learn, and like any discipline of knowledge or learning, progress in this field too has to be made in a step-by-step manner. No one can jump directly to the highest category of Sanyas, which is Avadhut, from the Vaanprastha stage, though this is not completely ruled out. This is because it has also been said that there may be persons who have realised their true self and the reality of the Atma early on in life, i.e. they have become wise and enlightened without having had to go through the formal prescribed path of having to accept Brahmacharya Ashram first, followed by Grihastha Ashram and then Vaanprastha Ashram before becoming a Sanyasi. For such persons who have developed profound enlightenment and wisdom, who have developed great

renunciation for this artificial world, and seek direct Mukti from it and Moksha for their selves—i.e. those who are very eager for spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation—a straight transition to the Avadhut state of Sanyas is allowed. Refer also to Canto 3, verse no. 5, 9, 77, and Canto 5, verse nos. 3-4, 7, 26.]

The main means of realisation and enlightenment for a Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi is ‘Chintan and Manan’, i.e. to do deep contemplation, to ponder deeply, to think intently, to reflect and do silent research on what has been learnt by the study of the scriptures, and hearing of the discourses during the earlier stages of Sanyas. They hear, think, contemplate, ponder and deduce the ‘truth’ themselves.

The main tool for a Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi in his spiritual pursuit is ‘Nidhi-dhyasan’, i.e. to repeatedly remember what has been learned and verified by personal experience. This repetition helps to firmly fix the mind and its sub-conscious on the great truths of the Mahavakyas, and changes the aspirant mentally from the inside. When his sub-conscious thinks of nothing else except what he has learnt from the scriptures in the form of the Mahavakyas, it is completely soaked in these thoughts so much so that the overall personality of the Sanyasi undergoes a drastic change, and he no longer remains an ordinary wandering friar or monk but transforms into a personification of Brahm.

The chief spiritual aim of all these exercises is to research and know about the Atma, to realise the truth of the Atma, and to become enlightened about this grand eclectic ‘absolute truth’ of creation (10).

एवं मुमुक्षुः सर्वदा संसारतारकं तारकमनुस्मरञ्जीवन्मुक्तो वसेदधिकारविशेषेण  
कैवल्यप्राप्त्युपायमन्विष्येद्यतिरित्युपनिषत् ॥११॥

yevam mumukṣuḥ sarvadā saṁsāratāraḥ tārakamanusmarañjīvanmukto  
vasedadhikāraṁ viśeṣeṇa kaivalyaprapṭyupāyamanviṣyedyatirityupaniṣat // 11 //

11. In the above described way, all the forms of Sanyasis must constantly, consistently and persistently strive to obtain spiritual liberation and deliverance for themselves, to obtain spiritual emancipation and salvation for their selves at all costs and to the exclusion of all other things.

For this purpose, they should take the help of the Tarak Mantra that can take them across the ocean-like world and give them freedom from it by constantly remaining focused on it, and repeating it consistently and persistently. [The Tarak Mantra is a divine Mantra that has the power and potential to provide the soul with the benefit of emancipation, salvation, liberation and deliverance. In the present case, this Mantra is OM which is a sound manifestation of Brahm and the easiest vehicle for Brahm-realisation. Refer Canto 4, verse no. 38, and full Canto 8.]

By doing this, they are deemed to be liberated from all the fetters that shackle ordinary creatures to this world, and thus they roam about like a free man.

Such an enlightened and exalted Sanyasi must endeavour to obtain the highest form of Mukti which is called Kaivalya. [That is, they must strive to merge their individual soul with the supreme Soul of creation known as Brahm so that, after this merger, they become one with Brahm and consequently they would not have to take birth again and re-enter this world. This is the ‘only’ or Kaivalya way how a creature can actually get true and real freedom from this world and this body. Refer Canto 5, verse no. 22.]

Verily, this is the great teaching of this Upanishad (11).

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### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 8

[In this Canto Brahma extensively explains to Narad the divine Mantra OM pertaining to Pranav or Brahm, the supreme transcendental Being, when the sage asked him about the Mantra which can help an aspirant to attain final Mukti (liberation and deliverance) from this world. It goes on to describe elaborately the meaning of the numerous terms that are used to indicate the various facets of the same universal divine entity known as Brahm that is supreme and transcendental. Here, almost all the esoteric terms used as adjectives or epithets for Brahm have been explained at a single place, and in this respect this Canto is unique in the pantheon of the Upanishads.]

## ॥ अष्टमोपदेशः ॥

अथ हैनं भगवन्तं परमेष्ठिनं नारदः पप्रच्छ संसारतारकं प्रसन्नो ब्रूहीति । तथेति परमेष्ठी वक्तुमुपचक्रमे  
ओमिति ब्रूहेति व्यष्टिसमष्टिप्रकारेण । का व्यष्टिः का समष्टिः संहारप्रणवः  
सृष्टिप्रणवश्चान्तर्बहिश्चोभयात्मकत्वात्त्रिविधो ब्रह्मप्रणवः । अन्तःप्रणवो व्यावहारिकप्रणवः । बाह्यप्रणव  
आर्षप्रणवः । उभयात्मको विराट्प्रणवः । संहारप्रणवो ब्रह्मप्रणवोऽर्धमात्राप्रणवः ॥१॥

atha hainaṃ bhagavantam parameṣṭhinam nāradaḥ papraccha  
saṃsāratārakam prasanno brūhīti /  
tatheti parameṣṭhī vaktumucakrame omīti brahmeti vyaṣṭisamaṣṭiprakāreṇa /  
kā vyaṣṭiḥ kā samaṣṭiḥ saṃhārapraṇavaḥ sṛṣṭipraṇava  
ścāntarbahiścobhayātmakatvātrividho brahmapraṇavaḥ /  
antaḥpraṇavo vyāvahārikapraṇavaḥ /  
bāhyapraṇava ārṣapraṇavaḥ /  
ubhayātmako virāṭpraṇavaḥ / saṃhārapraṇavo  
brahmapraṇavo'ardhamātrāpraṇavaḥ // 1 //

1. After the above discourse, sage Narad asked the supreme creator Brahma—‘Oh Lord! Which is the Mantra that can help the creature to cross over or find freedom from the endless cycle of birth and death? I have humbly come to seek this knowledge from you, so please be kind to enlighten me on the subject.’ [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 20, 26; Canto 7, verse no. 11.]

Brahma replied—‘So be it. I shall tell you about it. Oh son Narad, this Mantra known as Tarak Mantra is OM. [The word ‘Tarak’ means an instrument that provides spiritual liberation and deliverance, one that gives emancipation and salvation to the creature’s soul, a vehicle that takes across, a vehicle that can take a creature across the ocean of endless miseries and pains from which he is suffering in this world. The Tarak Mantra is a group of esoteric, ethereal and holy syllables, words or phrases

having mystical powers and divine potentials that can achieve miraculous results for the adherent as they have the authority to bestow special spiritual abilities on the creature and help in his liberation and deliverance, his emancipation and salvation. The Mantra that has this potential is called the Tarak Mantra.]

OM is a personification of Brahm (i.e. it represents the supreme transcendental Divinity in its most subtle and sublime form). Hence, a wise spiritual aspirant must meditate and contemplate upon OM both as a 'Vyasthi' as well as a 'Samasthi'. [Briefly, the word 'Vyasthi' means to treat an entity in isolation, individuality, single entity, and the word 'Samasthi' means totality, aggregate of things, all-inclusive. Therefore, OM is to be treated as standing for Brahm in all its manifestations—both at the micro level of creation as well as at the macro level of creation. It is to treat OM as an individual Mantra representing Brahm ('Vyasthi') as well as the vehicle for realising that universal cosmic Divinity that is all-pervading and all-including ('Samasthi'). This concept is elaborated below.]

Narad wished to have more elaboration on this eclectic and esoteric subject, so he asked—'Oh great grandfather! What is meant by the terms 'Vyasthi' and 'Samasthi'? Please be kind to explain.'

Brahma explained—'Vyasthi and Samasthi are the two aspects or limbs of the same Brahm manifested or revealed in the form of Pranav (i.e. as the ethereal sound reverberating as the background sound in the cosmic ether that is conceptualised in the form of the monosyllable word OM).

The same Brahm, also known as Pranav or OM, is said to have three subtle forms—viz. the first is known as 'Sanhaar Pranav (i.e. the Brahm that is the cause of conclusion; that exists beyond conclusion of creation)', the second is known as 'Srishti Pranav (i.e. the Brahm that is the cause of creation; the one that pre-dates creation; the one from which this creation has come into being)', and the third aspect is known as 'Ubhayaatmak Pranav (i.e. the Brahm that displays two characteristics; the Brahm which is both the concluder as well as the creator)'.

The 'Ubhayaatmak Pranav' again has two aspects—one is 'Antaha' (secret, hidden, internal, esoteric or subtle form of Brahm that is not visible or perceptible externally), and the other is 'Baahaya' (the external, visible, manifested and perceptible form of Brahm; the form that is easily known, seen, understood and experienced).

The Antaha Pranav (Brahm) (as enshrined in the Mantra OM) would be described in the next verse no. 2.

The Baahaya Pranav (Brahm) is also known as 'Vyavahaarik Pranav', or Brahm that is revealed in the practical world, the usual and customary form of Brahm known by the creature. This is the variant of Brahm that a creature comes in contact with. It is the external form of Brahm in practical life. It is the non-abstract and tangible aspect of Brahm that is otherwise beyond comprehension and too abstract and intangible to be grasped.

The Vyasthi Pranav (Brahm) is also known as Baahaya or Vyavahaarik Pranav. [This is because of one simple reason. The individual creature ('Vyasthi') is Brahm personified in the enlightened view of the Upanishads. The reason is that the Atma of the creature, which is his true self and which is pure consciousness, is this Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, residing in the heart of this individual creature. Without this Atma the creature would cease to exist. Since a creature is a verifiable and visible entity, since no one can deny his own existence, this revealed form of Brahm at the individual level—the Vyasthi level—is called 'Baahya Pranav or Baahya Brahm', or the form of Brahm that is externally visible, is seen, is tangible, is

on display, is well known and understood. It does not require any grounding in the Upanishads or the Vedas to be convinced about the existence of a living being right in the front of an observer. The Baahya form of Brahm is too evident to arouse any sort of doubt and confusion. The only thing that is needed is a sharpened intelligence and wisdom that are able to analyse and correctly interpret the teaching of the scriptures which say that each individual living being is a manifestation of Brahm, and to understand the reason behind this assertion of the scriptures. In other word, Brahm is revealed in its 'Vyasthi' form as an individual creature in this world. It is in practical life that one can feel and experience the presence of Brahm if one is wise and enlightened enough to realise the basic truth of the tenets of the scriptures that whatever that exists in this creation is nothing but Brahm. No other proof of Brahm's existence is needed than the presence of a living being right in the front of the wise observer.]

Aside of these forms of Brahm, there is another form known as 'Aarsha Pranav'. This form of Pranav or Brahm is also known as the 'Viraat' or the vast, macrocosmic, invisible, all-encompassing and all-pervasive form of Brahm. [The word 'Aarsha' means that about which the ancient sages and seers—or Rishis—had written, anything that is authorised by these Rishis and sanctified by the Vedas. Hence, that form of Brahm which includes everything in the creation, which displays the grand characteristics of being all-inclusive, all-pervading and all-encompassing, who is invisible and macrocosmic in nature and from—i.e. Brahm in its Viraat or vast and colossus form—is known as Aarsha because this form has been established and sanctified by the ancient sages who had meditated deeply and realised the vastness of the cosmic Consciousness that they named as 'Brahm', as well as by the Vedas that are essentially codified form of that esoteric and enigmatic knowledge. The Vedas are in effect the knowledge of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm that the ancient sages and seers left for posterity.]

The Sanhaar Pranav is also known as Brahm Pranav because it is in this form of the supreme Consciousness (Brahm or Pranav) that the creator Brahma dwells in a concealed form. [The Sanhaar Pranav is that aspect of the cosmic Consciousness, the 'Viraat Purush', that brings about the conclusion—'Sanhaar'—of creation. The word 'Sanhaar' means to end, kill, slay, annihilate, demolish. But a new phase of creation is hidden in the bosom of the same Viraat in the form of Brahma, the creator of the visible world. When the time is ripe, Brahma rises from the Viraat Purush's navel atop a divine lotus to initiate the new phase of creation. So, while the Viraat concludes this present creation as the Sanhaar Pranav, it is the same Divinity that would be the cause of the next generation of creation in the form of Brahma the creator. In the Purans, this Sanhaar Brahm has been named 'Rudra' which is the angry form of Brahm. Brahm has been depicted in its angry form as 'Rudra' because normally Brahm has a very calm and neutral demeanour in his role of the creator and sustainer of creation. He gets angry only when he decides to wind up the show. Without being angry, he would not be able to demolish the same creation that he has so assiduously nurtured for such a long period of time.]

The ethereal cosmic sound OM has four syllables or letters such as A etc. which symbolise the various aspects of this world such as its gross and other forms. The OM also has a fifth syllable called the 'Ardha Martra'<sup>1</sup> or half-syllable which is a nasal sound. This latter Ardha Matra stands for the un-manifested, invisible and formless Pranav or Brahm. [This is because sound has no physical shape or form.] (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word 'Ardha' means half, and 'Matra' means a part of the whole, a certain syllable in the language that is not complete in itself but is required to

complete the meaning of other letters or words. From the metaphysical perspective the ‘Ardha Matra’ of OM represents that phase of creation that lies beyond its present conclusion and prior to the beginning of the new creation. It is a sort of bridge between the present gross creation and the subtle aspect of the creation.

When we analyse OM as is done in the forthcoming verses, we observe that it has many components—viz. the letters A, U and M, followed by the Ardha Matra and then by the Naad and Bindu as described in verse no. 2 below. Now, the clear form of the letters A, U and M represent the gross aspect of creation, the Naad and Bindu represent the higher subtle state, and the ‘Ardha Matra’ is the bridge or link between the two. The ‘Ardha Matra’ has a meaning only as long as there is a gross aspect and a subtle aspect of existence much like the case when a bridge has any importance only when there are two banks that have to be linked or required to be transited by a traveller.

As has been said in this verse, it represents the invisible or intangible aspect of Brahm as it represents a transitional aspect of Brahm—from the physical aspect of Brahm in this visible creation to the sublime Brahm in its cosmic form that has no physical forms; it indicates a transition from the gross to the subtle.

This basic and simple idea should be borne in mind while proceeding further with the discussion of OM.]

ओमिति ब्रह्म । ओमित्येकाक्षरमन्तःप्रणवं विद्धि । स चाष्टधा भिद्यते ।  
अकारोकारमकारार्धमात्रानादबिन्दुकलाशक्तिश्चेति । तत्र चत्वार अकारश्चायुतावयवान्वित उकारः  
सहस्रावयवान्वितो मकारः शतावयवोपेतोऽर्धमात्राप्रणवोऽनन्तावयवाकारः । सगुणो विराट्प्रणवः संहारो  
निर्गुणप्रणव उभयात्मकोत्पत्तिप्रणवो यथाप्लुतो विराट्प्लुत प्लुतःसंहारः ॥२॥

omiti brahma / omityekākṣaramantaḥpraṇavaṃ viddhi /  
sa cāṣṭadhā bhidyate /  
akāroḥkāramakārdhamātrānādabindukalāśaktiśceti /  
tatra catvāra akāraścāyutāvayavānvita ukāraḥ  
sahastrāvayavānvito makāraḥ  
śatāvayavopeto’rdhamātrāpraṇavo’nantāvayavākāraḥ /  
saguṇo virāṭpraṇavaḥ saṃhāro nirguṇapraṇava ubhayātmakotpattipraṇavo  
yathāpluto virāṭplutaḥ plutaḥsaṃhāraḥ // 2 //

2. Now, the esoteric and secret aspects of OM are being described. This Pranav (the ethereal cosmic sound represented by the word OM) is Brahm. [In other words, OM is a sound manifestation of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm.] This OM is the monosyllabic Mantra (a formula) for Brahm. Hence, OM, Brahm and Pranav are synonyms.

OM has been divided, for the purpose of study and analysis only, into eight components or aspects or sections. [Otherwise, it is an indivisible monosyllabic word.] These eight parts are the letters A, U and M, the half-syllable called Ardha Matra, the Naad and Bindu (the crescent moon-shaped sign with a centrally-located dot dangling right over it at its focal point that is placed on the top of the visual depiction of OM), Kalaa (varying aspects or qualities or virtues of OM) and Shakti (dynamic energy that is latently present and inherent to the word OM).

[According to some versions, there are four letters constituting OM instead of only three—and they are A, O, U and M. In this version, the eight components would

be these four letters + the Ardha Matra + the Naad (called the Kalaa) + Bindu (symbolising the Shakti) = 8.]

Further, each of the four letters and syllables (A, O, U and M; or A, U, M and the Ardha Matra) are divided into number of sub-divisions or parts. For instance, merely the letter A has ten thousand subtle forms or aspects or sub-divisions or parts, the letter U has one thousand subtle forms, and the letter M has one hundred subtle forms. Similarly, the Ardha Matra too has uncountable subtle aspects. [It is easy to understand this phenomenon. A motion picture consists of hundreds of thousands of still frames that pass before the eye in rapid succession, so quickly that they give an illusion of motion. Similarly, the monosyllabic OM also consists of millions of tiny bits of sound waves that coalesce with each other at the subtlest level so fast and rapidly that when is heard is one composite and seamless form of sound that is equivalent to the humming of the black bee. It is impossible to separate the individual units of sound that compositely form the word OM, but just for the plain purpose of analysis OM has been divided into distinct sounds as indicated by the letters mentioned herein above.]

Ancient sages and seers who could hear the cosmic sound during their meditative and contemplative sessions had such a razor sharp and sensitive mind that they could not only hear but also analyse the constituent parts of this sound just like we have spectrometers that analyse the constituent of rocks and chemicals based on the colours emitted by them, or the prism that can segregate the different constituent elements of white light into seven colours. Further, each sound was again sub-divided into smaller units just like we have red and infra red, or violet and ultra-violet colours of the spectrum, or such colours as orange which consists of a combination of red and yellow, green which is a combination of yellow and blue, violet which combines blue with red, and grey which results from a combination of white and black.]

The Viraat Pranav (i.e. the cosmic all-encompassing and all-pervading form of Brahm) is also called 'Sagun Brahm'. [The entire visible aspect of creation is a manifestation of Brahm that exists in its cosmic form known as Viraat. The Upanishads describe this Viraat as the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm. When the entire creation is taken into consideration, this definition fits into place because everything that exists is one or the other form of the same cosmic form of Brahm. This can be easily understood by a simple example. Clay or earth is used by a potter to shape numerous pots and toys having uncountable varieties of shapes, forms and sizes. He may even colour them differently. But basically they are all clay or earth; it is the same clay or earth that has been used to mould them. Similarly, the entire creation has been moulded from the body of one Viraat. Since this world is visible, this form of Brahm is called 'Sagun'—one that is visible, has attributes and specific features and characters. The 'Sagun' (one with Guna) Brahm has 'Gunas' (certain virtues, attributes or qualities) that are discernible, tangible, quantifiable and definable.]

On the other hand, the Sanhaar Pranav is known as 'Nirguna Brahm'. [The Sanhaar form of Pranav refers to that aspect of Brahm which exists beyond the living world, that aspect of Brahm which is unknown and unseen, and which survives after the known world is concluded, eliminated or ceases to exist ('Sanhaar'). This aspect of Brahm which silently brings about the conclusion of creation and which proceeds death is invisible and imperceptible—hence, called Nirguna, one that has no known attributes and characters. When the creation concludes, no one knows what lies beyond. Hence, Brahm that exists beyond creation is 'unknown' and intangible.]



Hence, that aspect of Brahm which is concerned with the end of creation, or which is related to the conclusion of this existence, is the 'Nirguna' form of Brahm.]

Finally, the Sristhi Pranav is known by the combined form consisting of both the Saguna Brahm as well as the Nirguna Brahm. [The word 'Sristhi' refers to creation. This creation exists in two apparent forms—one that is visible or which is Saguna, and that is invisible or which is Nirguna. What we see and know is 'Saguna', and what we cannot know or see is 'Nirguna'. ]

The Viraat Pranav is said to consist of all the four letters of OM such as A, O, U, M, and it is equivalent to the Samasthi aspect of Brahm. [This is because the Viraat stands for all the aspects of creation—viz. its creation is represented by the letter A, its development by the letter O, its expansion and growth by the letter U, and its conclusion by the letter M. This covers the entire gamut of visible creation, and hence it is called Samasthi—all-inclusive, all-encompassing, comprehensive, and the complete aspect of Brahm.]

The Sanhaar Pranav is represented by the Ardha Matra, and is equivalent to the 'Vyasthi' aspect of Brahm. [As has been explained in a note of verse no. 1 above, the Ardha Matra stands for the conclusion or termination of the sound of OM just like the word Sanhaar which also means conclusion or end of creation. Hence, both are synonymous with each other. When individual units of creation end, they all collapse into one single mass to become indistinguishable from each other; they become homogenous in nature and texture. Since they all become one and inseparable from one another once the visible creation ends—removing distinctions and specialised features that mark the individuality of each gross visible entity of creation till it existed—so when we deal with that aspect of creation that is related to its post conclusion phase we deal with one single mass, and therefore it is 'Vyasthi'. The word 'Vyasthi' means to treat an entity as a single unit instead of taking its myriad and distinctive forms into consideration. In the context of OM it would mean the stretched or prolonged sound that follows the end of the pronunciation of 'OM' which cannot be sub-divided like the earlier sound of OM which was divided into the three letters, viz. A, U and M.

In the context of Brahm, the word 'Vyasthi' refers to the only one single non-dual form of cosmic Consciousness that exists after the visible and known—or Saguna—creation, represented by the articulately spoken letters of OM, comes to a conclusion. It is called Vyasthi because it is single, one and isolated. This form of Brahm has no duality in it in as much as it is un-formed and without any attributes. This Vyasthi form of Brahm has no myriad forms or characters; it is like a calm sky that is immutable, uniform, all-encompassing, all-pervading, and aloof from all dichotomies and schisms.] (2).

विराट्प्रणवः षोडशमात्रात्मकः षट्त्रिंशत्तत्त्वातीतः । षोडशमात्रात्मकत्वं कथमित्युच्यते । अकारः  
प्रथमोकारो द्वितीया मकारस्तृतीयार्धमात्रा चतुर्थी नादः पञ्चमी बिन्दुः षष्ठी कला सप्तमी कलातीताष्टमी  
शान्तिर्नवमी शान्त्यतीता दशमी उन्मन्येकादशी मनोन्मनी द्वादशी पुरी त्रयोदशी मध्यमा चतुर्दशी  
पश्यन्ती पञ्चदशी परा षोडशी पुनश्चतुःषष्टिमात्रा  
प्रकृतिपुरुषद्वैविध्यमासाद्याष्टाविंशत्युत्तरभेदमात्रास्वरूपमासाद्य सगुणनिर्गुणत्वमुपेत्यैकोऽपि ब्रह्मप्रणवः  
॥३॥

virāṭpranavaḥ ṣoḍaśamātrātmakāḥ ṣaṭtriṃśattattvātītaḥ /  
 ṣoḍaśamātrātmakatvaṃ kathamityucyate /  
 akāraḥ prathamokāro dvitīyā makārastrītyārdhamātrā  
 caturthī nādaḥ pañcamī binduḥ ṣaṣṭhī kalā saptamī kalātītāṣṭamī  
 śāntirnavamī śāntyatītā daśamī unmanyekādaśī manonmanī dvādaśī  
 purī trayodaśī madhyamā caturdaśī paśyanti pañcadaśī parā ṣoḍaśī  
 punaścatuḥṣaṣṭimātrā  
 prakṛtipuruṣadvaividhyamāsādyāṣṭāvimśatyuttarabhedamātrāsvarūpamāsādyā  
 saṃṇanirguṇatvamupetyaiko'pi brahmapranavaḥ // 3 //

3. The Viraat Pranav (i.e. the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm that personifies the sum total of all the gross bodies of this creation) consists of, or is endowed with, all the sixteen Matras<sup>1</sup>. [The sixteen Matras are enumerated below. In the context of the sound of OM, the sixteen Matras refer to the different vowel and basic consonant sounds of the Sanskrit language.]

This Viraat Pranav is said to transcend and go beyond the thirty-six Tattvas of creation<sup>2</sup>.

The letter 'A' is the first Matra of OM, 'U' is the second Matra, 'M' is the third Matra, the 'Ardha Matra', or the half-syllable represented by the long-drawn humming sound made at the end of OM when the mouth closes, is the fourth Matra, the 'Naad' (the crescent-shaped moon placed on the top of the symbol of OM) is the fifth Matra, the 'Bindu' (the dot placed on the top of the Naad at its focal point) is the sixth Matra, the Kalaa (the various aspects of OM or Brahm) is its seventh Matra, the Kalatit (the transcendental aspect of OM or Brahm) is its eighth Matra, the virtue of Shanti (peace and tranquillity) is its ninth Matra, the Shantitya (the state that goes beyond ordinary peace; the transcendental state of blissfulness) is its tenth Matra, the Unmani (a state of mental non-attachment, detachment, non-involvement and renunciation) is its eleventh Matra, the Manomani (the higher state of Unmani when the sub-conscious too becomes defunct) is its twelfth Matra, the Puri or Vaikhari (i.e. the transcendental state reached by a hermit in the higher stages of spiritual progress; the state when the reverberations of OM are clearly heard as a resonance that submerges the aspirant and when he can distinguish between its various shades of sound—represented by its initial letter 'A') is its thirteenth Matra, the Madhyama (the median or middle stage of the sound of OM—represented by its letter 'U') is its fourteenth Matra, the Pashyanti (the stage of Naad or the sound of OM when it rises from the Mooladhar Chakra located at the lower end of the body and enters the heart—represented by its letter 'M') is its fifteenth Matra, and the Para (the transcendental state when the resonance of OM is heard in the head—represented by its half-syllable called the Ardha Matra) is its sixteenth Matra.

The Pranav Brahm, or the supreme transcendental Consciousness that exists in the form of the ethereal sound OM and its awareness, having the above described sixteen Matras or aspects is distinct and beyond the purview of the Turiyatit state of existence. [That is, to say that Brahm is definable or understandable even by the transcendental state of consciousness known as Turiyateet is a grave mistake.]

The Turiyatit state of existence has four divisions or aspects—viz. Ot, Anugyat, Anugya and Avikalp. [The word 'Ot' means comfort, peace, bliss as well as little, frugal; the word 'Anugyat' means one that is known by mandate, by the command or orders given by the scriptures; the word 'Anugya' means command, order, mandate, permission; and the word 'Avikalp' means that which is certain, is doubtless, that which has no alternatives or choices. Hence, Turiyatit state of

existence refers to that state in which one can obtain certain bliss that comes with realising one's true divine nature and form as conscious Atma as narrated or taught by the scriptures. In the context of what is said here, refer also to verse no. 20 of Canto 8 of this Upanishad.]

Now since Brahm having sixteen Matras or Kalaas pervades in all these four states or divisions of Turiyatit, it follows that the total number of Matras or Kalaas of Brahm are sixty-four in all. [The 16 Matras or Kalaas of Brahm as described in stanza 1 and 3 of this verse multiplied by the 4 aspects of Turiyatit as described above =  $16 \times 4 = 64$ .]

Again, the Pranav Brahm (i.e. the attribute-less and formless cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm) is revealed in two forms—viz. the Purush (the primordial Male) and Prakriti (the primordial Nature). Since Pranav Brahm in its primary form is said to have sixty-four Kalaas or Matras (as discussed above), we conclude that the total number of Matras or Kalaas of Brahm would be one hundred and twenty-eight. [ $64 \times 2 = 128$ .] Thus, Brahm is said to have one hundred and twenty-eight Matras or Kalaas.

Thus we conclude that the same sublime Brahm, inspite of being one, immutable, indivisible and non-dual, appears to have so many varied forms, depicting so many varied characteristics, attributes and properties, and seemingly having so many existences, all of them depending upon how and from which angle one looks at this divine non-dual entity. This is also the reason why the same Brahm has two basic forms of existence—one is the Saguna or the form which has specific attributes and is visible, and the other is Nirguna or the form which has no attributes and which is invisible (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The word *Matra* literally means amount, volume, quantity, magnitude, ingredient, part, section, aspect, facet or dimension of anything. The creation has been divided into sixteen parts or sections. These are also called the sixteen Kalaas of creation. Since Brahm is the sum total of creation, the former is also said to have sixteen Kalaas. The word 'Kalaa' literally refers to the special qualities, attributes, virtues, strengths, powers and potentials possessed by an entity. Its other connotations include—(a) shape, form, contours of a thing; (b) special qualities, art, craft, skills, expertise, attributes etc. that one possesses; the shades or aspects of one's overall personality; (c) a division, portion, fraction, phase or degree of anything.

The word *Pranav* is a synonym for the cosmic sound known as Naad which is the reverberating sound in the cosmic ether that fills the space of the sky. This Naad is regarded as being the closest analogue of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness. This sound is homogenous and all-pervading. It is from this Naad that the first signs of life in the form of sound waves having energy were generated. It is from this Naad that all forms of sounds, having all shades of notes, meters and tunes were created. These primary forms of sound evolved into different phonetic alphabets of so many different languages and spoken tongue which all have the same set of primary sounds as their base. The language may be intelligible or not, such as those spoken by the modern man and those spoken by the primitive man and the animals respectively, but all of them have one common denominator—and it is the basic sound of OM or Naad having the sixteen Matras as enumerated in this Upanishad. It's almost like music that is played by so many instruments—though each instrument appears to produce different type of sound but basically all of these genres of instruments have one single language, and it is the language of 'music'.

The word 'Matra' also refers to the vowel sounds of the Sanskrit language. Since the entire gamut of creation is said to have its origin in the cosmic vibration that was generated in ether at the initial stage of creation, and these vibrations created sound, it follows that Brahm which symbolically stands for this entire creation would naturally

consist of the entire spectrum of sound as represented by the sixteen sounds of the Sanskrit vowels.

In the context of OM, which is the cosmic ethereal sound of space, it refers to the different shades, hues, tones and aspects in which OM is known to exist. In essence it means that the macrocosmic form of Brahm that is also known as the 'Viraat Purush' encompasses all shades of knowledge encrypted in words that are formed out of the basic sound of creation, called the various Matras of OM.

<sup>2</sup>The thirty-six *Tattvas* of creation— The word *Tattvas* literally means the essence, the reality, the true state and the basic principle of anything. It also implies the principal elements of creation. The *Tattvas* are the primary or fundamental elements or units or dimensions or aspects of creation which act as the building blocks of creation, not only as its brickwork but also to decide its exterior façade and interior character. We have *primary elements* that were formed at the time of creation, and the *secondary elements* that developed later on as the creation evolved, and finally there were the tertiary elements which were the offshoots to the process of creation when the complexities of the latter increased.

A word may have different connotations according to the context in which it is used. For example, we speak of a flower's *Tattva*, i.e. the volatile liquid extracted from the flowers and used as various scents and perfumes. It is called the 'essence' of the flower. Even the nectar is called 'essence' or *Tattva* of the flower. The oil extracted from seeds and herbs are also called their *Tattva* or essential extracts. The common factor in all these is the 'liquid or fluid' nature of the *Tattva*. It is this reason why life is said to have emerged in water, a fluid and elixir of life and vitality, the 'essence' or *Tattva* that sustains and protects life. The primary essence of creation was not some liquid as we understand the term; it was 'ethereal', more like the air or wind element, resembling more closely to the something that fills the outer space above the surface of the earth. It must be understood that though 'air' does not exist outside the atmosphere of the earth, it is not an absolute vacuum, for there is something that lies between any two celestial bodies or planets, separating them and preventing them from colliding with each other. All celestial bodies are dipped in this cosmic liquid which is like a 'volatile essence' drawn from flowers. It is 'volatile' because it is never the same, and that is why we say that the creation is continuously and perpetually changing and evolving. Had it not been so, had that *Tattva* been a solid, everything in creation would have been cast in one fixed mould for eternity.

According to the philosophy of *Tantra Shastra* dedicated to the worship of divinity in the form of Shiva and Shakti, the process of creation took the following initial steps. Before anything came into being, Brahm, the supreme consciousness and the ultimate truth of creation, known as Shiva, was established in his own radiant effulgence or self-illumination symbolising his splendid glory, majesty and divinity. Hence he was called 'Prakash', literally meaning light. When he decided to deliberate and actually started the process of deliberation in order to start the process of creation, there was a subtle 'spandan' or a slight throb or imperceptible movement which transformed into a vibration. The waves generated by this initial vibration developed in the cosmic ether and gradually coalesced with each other to give rise to higher waves of higher amplitudes. This produced the cosmic sound called the Naad. Since the creation was conceived in the bowl of the cosmic ether, the energy of the initial sound was focused at a central point, called the focal point or the dot or 'Bindu'. This Bindu contained the combined powers of both the male Shiva and the female Shakti like a dicotyledonous seed which produced the two separate entities called Shiva and Shakti. The union of these two resulted in the unfolding of the rest of the creation. Thus it will be observed that whatever exists in this creation can be traced back to this primeval Naad. Hence, the latter is called 'Shabda Brahm', or the Brahm as sound. Therefore it is very natural to assume that all Mantras dedicated to any divine entity and consisting of the sound element (because Mantra consist of letters and words, and are chanted or repeated to make them effective) has its origin

in this Shabda Brahm and gets its powers and energy from this Shabda Brahm. In other words, the Mantra contains in itself the essential meaning, form and spirit of the deity whose Mantra it is, and which is being worshipped and invoked. Constant repetition of the Mantra generates so much energy in due course of time that the deity being worshipped is revealed. This is because the sound has great powers and energy as is evident when reverberation of sound waves and the resonance created by them are so powerful and forceful that they can shatter sheet glass in windows when an explosion occurs near a building.

Primarily there were five basic elements or Tattvas of creation—such as the sky, air or wind, fire or energy, water and earth in increasing order of density or grossness. From them came the secondary elements—they are the various Tattvas of creation. These latter vary according to the level and dynamics of creation one is dealing with in terms of metaphysics. Finally came the tertiary elements—they are the various Anatahakarans, the various Vikaars and Vrittis, the three Gunas etc. that would form the third layer of elements or Tattvas of creation.

These elements can be compared to the elements of material science of the modern world, such as the elements calcium, magnesium, potassium, selenium etc. which are heavier and grosser in nature as compared to other elements such as the gases oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, helium etc. which are lighter and subtler. Then there is carbon which is the base of an entire field of chemistry called organic chemistry, much like we have Atma which in association of different other elements form a vast array of organic chemicals and material products of daily use. If carbon is compared to the basic unit called Atma in metaphysics, then the other elements that combine with it are the various Gunas, Vikaars, Vasanas and Vrittis that surround this Atma to give rise to an uncountable number of creatures of different nature, temperaments, character and personalities.

In this scenario, Brahm would be like the primary Atom which left to itself is neutral and inactive. It is only when certain changes take place in its core, such as the shift in the position of its electron etc. that the chain of reaction starts that would ultimately result in not only producing newer elements but releasing energy or absorbing matter from the surrounding atmosphere. The Atma would be more like the atom of the carbon atom which is at the heart of all organic compounds.

The thirty-six Tattvas are the following—the 25 Tattvas as described in Shankhya philosophy<sup>1\*</sup> + 1 Isvar (of Patanjali's Yoga Darshan) + the 8 Vikaars or faults<sup>2\*</sup> + 1 Vyakta (that which is visible and has attributes, i.e. the Sanguna aspect of Viraat Pranav or Brahm) + 1 Avyakta (that which is not visible, not having any attributes and characteristics, i.e. the Nirguna aspect of the Viraat Pranav or Brahm) = total 36 Tattvas. {<sup>1\*</sup>The 25 Tattvas according to the Sankhya philosophy are the following—Purush (the primary Male), Prakrit (Nature), Mahtattva (the powerful Buddhi or intellect), Ahankar (ego, pride), the five organs of perception (i.e. the eye, nose, ear, tongue and skin), the five organs of action (i.e. the hand, leg, mouth, excretory and genitals), the Mana (mind), the five perceptions (such as the spoken word or speech, sight, smell, touch and taste), the five Bhuts (i.e. the five primary elements, the earth, water, fire, air and space or sky) = 25. <sup>2\*</sup>The eight Vikaars according to verse no. 17 of the Shaarirak Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, they are the following—They are the following—one Mana (mind) + one Buddhi (intellect) + one Ahankar (pride and arrogance) + one Akash element + one air element + one fire element + one water element + one earth element = total of eight elements that cast their shadow on the purity of Nature.}}

सर्वधारः परंज्योतिरेष सर्वेश्वरो विभुः । सर्वदेवमयः सर्वप्रपञ्चाधारगर्भितः ॥४॥

sarvādhāraḥ paramjyotiřeṣa sarveśvaro vibhuḥ /

sarvadevamayaḥ sarvaprapañcādhāragarbhitah // 4 //

4. [The ethereal sound OM, also known as Pranav, is said to be the manifestation of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness that is all-pervading and is the cause of this creation as well as its conclusion. Now, an attempt is being made to outline the main sublime qualities or virtues of this cosmic Brahm. Those qualities or virtues are not exhaustive but only indicative.]

The supreme cosmic Divinity known as Brahm is the supporting foundation and cause of everything in existence. It is self-illuminated and gloriously brilliant. It is the Lord of all the living beings, and is all-pervading and omnipresent.

Brahm is honoured by the title of ‘Vibhu’—one who is almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, all-pervading, magnanimous, eternal, majestic and powerful Lord of all.

All the Gods are nothing but various manifestations of this Brahm to carry out different functions of creation.

The cosmic crucible called Prakriti or Nature in which the entire world characterised by the preponderance of delusions and falsehoods, a world infused and suffused wholly in illusions, deceit and confusions collectively called ‘Maya’, was conceived, is also present in or included as a part of the bowls of this Brahm that is infinite and fathomless (4).

सर्वक्षरमयः कालः सर्वागममयः शिवः । सर्वश्रुत्युत्तमो मृग्यः सकलोपनिषन्मयः ॥५॥

sarvākṣaramayaḥ kālah sarvāgamamayaḥ śivah /  
sarvaśrutyuttamo mṛgyaḥ sakalopaniṣanmayaḥ // 5 //

5. The manifestation of Brahm in the form of ‘sound’, i.e. the subtle sound of OM representing the conscious living world that speaks (the ability to speak is an irrefutable and incontrovertible sign of life and consciousness because dead entities do not speak or hear), is revealed in the form of all the letters of the (Sanskrit) language. [This is a metaphoric way of saying that all knowledge is Brahm personified, because knowledge is encrypted in words and it is disseminated through the use of words, and words are based on alphabets which are simply symbol or sign representation of the phonetic sound.]

Brahm personifies the element of Kaal or the eternal factor of ‘time’. [The concept of ‘Kaal’ is a vast, all-inclusive concept even as ‘time’ is an eternal factor that surrounds the entire existence from the outside. Nothing exists beyond the boundary of ‘time’ or Kaal; nothing remains immune to the effects of ‘time’ or Kaal. That is why we say that one is facing ‘bad or good’ time when things do not remain under one’s control. This is because ‘time’ has an overriding and overruling authority over all the activities of the creature in this world. The ‘time’ would outlive this creation and would be there even before the next generation of creation comes into being. It is in the bowls of ‘time’ that the creation exists, it is in the fathomless bowls of ‘time’ that it would vanish when its time is due and up, and it is from this bowl of ‘time’ that it would again emerge when the time comes for its revival. Hence, ‘Kaal’ is treated as being equivalent to Brahm—it both precedes and follows creation.]

Brahm is an embodiment of all forms of speech or words. [That is, all the languages on this planet—mere sounds as made by animals, or the phonetic language

as used by the human race—are revelations of the stupendous dynamic ability of Brahm to express himself.]

Brahm is Shiva personified. [That is, Brahm is an embodiment of the grand virtues of auspiciousness, holiness, purity, divinity and truth—virtues that Shiva personifies. These auspicious virtues of Brahm are also known as the ‘Shiva principle’.]

One must research and attempt to learn the truth about this Brahm when one studies the scriptures, as the latter unanimously proclaim the supremacy and truthfulness of this single entity that is the subject matter of all forms of knowledge. In fact, this Brahm is what all the Upanishads talk and preach about (5).

भूतं भव्यं भविष्यद्यत्त्रिकालोदितमव्ययम् । तदप्योङ्कारमेवायं विद्धि मोक्षप्रदायकम् ॥६॥

bhūtaṁ bhavyaṁ bhaviṣyadyattrikāloditamavyayam /  
tadapyoṅkāramevāyaṁ viddhi mokṣapradāyakam // 6 //

6. This Brahm encompasses all dimensions of time. It is the past, the present and the future, and the world that exists in all these three spheres of time.

Brahm is that eternal, immaculate and imperishable Absolute Truth that exists beyond all known manifestations of creation called the three Bhuvans or worlds. [The three Bhuvans are the terrestrial world, the heavenly world, and the nether world. Brahm literally surrounds these three worlds like a moat surrounds a fort. It is like the citadel of creation where the supreme Emperor lives.]

This Brahm, in its cosmic manifestation that has no attributes and which is eternal and all-pervading, is in the form of the ethereal sound represented by the word OM. Those who are wise and knowledgeable say that this OM is the vehicle or medium that provides the creature with Moksha (emancipation and salvation). That is, when a wise spiritual aspirant comes to realise the truth of Brahm and the significance of OM, he uses the latter as an easy and specific tool to come in direct contact with the Principal (Brahm) that this word (OM) represents (6).

तमेवात्मानमित्येतद्ब्रह्मशब्देन वर्णितम् । तदेकममृतमजरमनुभूय तथोमिति ॥७॥

tamevātmānamityetadbrahmaśabdena varṇitam /  
tadekamamṛtamajaramanubhūya tathomiti // 7 //

7. The eternal and imperishable Brahm which is implied by the word OM is the divine, sublime entity that is also known as the Atma. [The Atma is the creature’s own ‘self’ which is pure consciousness that resides in his body, in the subtle heart.]

Hence, a wise and erudite aspirant should establish a clear and direct link between his Atma and Brahm through the medium of OM. Since OM represents Brahm, and since Atma is also a representative of Brahm, it follows that by meditating upon OM the spiritual aspirant’s Atma—which is his true self—is able to establish a direct link with Brahm who is eternal and imperishable as well as the only Truth in creation<sup>1</sup>.

With this eclectic view, the aspirant is able to obtain access to Amrit, the elixir of bliss and eternity.

He becomes eternal in the sense that he realises that his ‘true self’ known as the Atma is a personification of Brahm, and hence it has the unique virtues of Brahm which include being eternal, infinite and imperishable (7).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Herein lie the importance of using OM as a Mantra to realise Brahm and be enlightened about one’s true ‘self’. It is well established that OM is a sound and verbal representation of Brahm, and that the Atma is a subtle image of the same Brahm. So, when the aspirant meditates using OM as a medium, he is able to establish a direct union between his Atma and Brahm. In effect, OM is the bridge that links the two banks of the river—one bank is the Atma and the other is Brahm. Say, what difference is there between the two banks of even an ordinary river on earth, except that the one where the traveller stands is known as ‘this bank’, and the one where he intends to go as ‘that bank’? Other than that, the two banks are the same; as far as the river is concerned both its banks are the same. They have the same water of the same river touching their sides. The two sides represent the same earth that is separated by the same river. A bridge across this river makes it easier for the traveller to go from either side to the other just as if he was walking on solid ground instead of having to cross the formidable barrier of liquid water on which it is impossible for any man to walk on foot.

Let us take another example to understand the relation between OM and the spiritual aspirant. Suppose a man is trapped in a dungeon or a prison that is surrounded by a moat. This moat stands as a formidable barrier between his life of imprisonment and his freedom because even if he is freed from the walls of the dungeon he would not be able to go on the other side to enjoy his newly found freedom. Now say, how would he cross the moat to his freedom? Of course, the options open to him for the purpose of crossing the moat are the following—he can either swim across it, or take a boat, or just walk across a bridge on the moat. Obviously, the last choice is hassle free and the easiest way to freedom. So, if one were to treat this gross world as the prison for the soul, the easiest way for him to reach the goal of spiritual liberation and deliverance is to take the aid of OM as this is not only the simplest of Mantras but also the nearest analogue of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness which is like the vast stretch of green land which his Atma, the microcosmic form of the same consciousness that resides in the individual’s own gross body as his soul, as his Spirit, wishes to reach after a stifling lifetime living inside the body of the creature. This would be the Atma’s liberation just like a prisoner breathing fresh air after spending a lifetime in the dark recesses of a dungeon when he would run hither and thither on the meadow across the moat in extreme ecstasy at finally being able to leave behind the horrific time spent within the confines of the walls of the prison.

In the present context of this Upanishad’s teaching, this spiritual ‘bridge’ is OM. It establishes a permanent link between the Atma and Brahm. The river can be compared to the formidable world which has to be crossed by the spiritual aspirant who wants his Moksha or final emancipation and salvation, or one who wishes Mukti or liberation and deliverance for his trapped soul. Just like a bridge is the most comfortable method to reach the other side of the river, the ethereal Mantra OM is the easiest and the surest medium by which the creature can reach his spiritual goal of realising Brahm. ]

सशरीरं समारोप्य तन्मयत्वं तथोमिति । त्रिशरीरं तमात्मानं परं ब्रह्म विनिश्चिनु ॥८॥

saśarīraṃ samāropya tanmayatvaṃ tathomiti /  
triśarīraṃ tamātmānaṃ paraṃ brahma viniścīnu // 8 //



8. With this sublime and holistic view of creation along with the realisation that everything is Brahm personified, or that Brahm embodies the entire creation in its universal cosmic form, he must understand that the same Brahm has a gross body that is visible (the Saguna Brahm) as well as a subtle body that is not visible (the Nirguna Brahm).

Similarly, he must be firmly established in the eclectic view that the Atma and the supreme transcendental Brahm are one and the same (8).

परं ब्रह्मानुसंदध्याद्विश्वादीनां क्रमः क्रमात् । स्थूलत्वात्स्थूलभुक्त्वाच्च सूक्ष्मत्वात्सूक्ष्म भुक् परम् ॥९॥  
 ऐक्यत्वानन्दभोगाच्च सोऽयमात्मा चतुर्विधः । चतुष्पाज्जागरितः स्थूलः स्थूलप्रज्ञो हि विश्वभुक् ॥१०॥  
 एकोनविंशतिमुखः साष्टाङ्गः सर्वगः प्रभुः । स्थूलभुक् चतुरात्माथ विश्वो वैश्वानरः पुमान् ॥११॥

param brahmānusandadhyādviśvādīnāṃ kramāḥ kramāt /  
 sthūlatvāsthūlabhuktvācca sūkṣmatvātsūkṣmabhuk param // 9 //  
 aikatvānandabhogācca so'yamātmā caturvidhaḥ /  
 catuṣpājāgaritaḥ sthūlaḥ sthūlaprajñō hi viśvabhuk // 10 //  
 ekonaviṃśatimukhaḥ sāṣṭāṅgaḥ sarvagaḥ prabhuḥ /  
 sthūlabhuk caturātmātha viśvo vaiśvānaraḥ pumān // 11 //

9-11. [Verse nos. 9-19 describe the four Paads, literally the legs or the steps but more practically meaning the four aspects or forms in which the Atma exists in this creation. Since the Atma is a microcosmic image of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, it follows that these four aspects relate to the four forms in which Brahm exists in this creation. Again, since everything in creation is a manifestation of Brahm, and there is nothing that is not Brahm, these four Paads therefore describe the four aspects of creation or its four basic forms. Refer also to Canto 5, verse nos. 24-25, and Canto 6, verse nos. 3-4 of this Upanishad in this context.]

Now the different Paads of the supreme Brahm are being enumerated in a step-by-step manner. Since the Atma is a personification of this Brahm, since it is this Atma residing inside the body of the creature that actually perceives this world and enjoys it in its gross, subtle and subtlest forms, and since inspite of all this the Atma retains its primary form as being eternally blissful and contented, it too has all the different Paads associated with Brahm.

It is said that the Atma has four Paads or steps or aspects or forms similar to that of Brahm.

The Jagrat or waking state of consciousness is the first Paad of the Atma at the micro level of creation, and of Brahm at the macro level of creation.

[Briefly, the Jagrat state of consciousness is that state in which the creature perceives the physical external world through its gross body and its sense organs. In this state, the stimuli from the external world are received by the organs of perception and sent to the brain or mind. The latter then does the actual interpretation job and gives the necessary instructions to the organs of action to act. For more serious matters it consults the intellect. During this waking state, the creature becomes aware of the existence of the physical world, comes to witness it first hand, and gains a hands-on experience of its varied facets. It does have to imagine the existence of this world because the latter is witnessed first hand directly; it's not hearsay. In the entire episode, the sub-conscious mind stores information gathered by the mind and intellect

for future reference. Hence, during the Jagrat state, the mind and intellect as well as the gross body consisting of the various sense organs are directly involved. The word 'Jagrat' also has a metaphoric connotation in as much as it implies that whatever the creature comes to learn is when he is wide awake, when he is receptive to information, and can consciously pick and choose what to and what not to learn by way of selecting what to hear, smell, taste, touch and see. It is called 'Viswa' or the world at large because he not only learns about his immediate surroundings but about the world as it exists even in far off places, in the past and the present relying upon what he sees and deduces from the information gathered. Based on this statistical knowledge the creature can even predict the future intelligently.]

In this form, the visible gross world is the body of Brahm in the same way as the gross body of the individual consisting of the organs of perception and action is the visible body of Atma. [This is because Brahm lives in this vast creation just like the Atma lives in the body of the individual creature. Even as the body of the individual has no life and meaning once the Atma or the pure consciousness residing in it leaves, the entire creation would lose its relevance and importance as soon as Brahm is taken out of it.]

Brahm pervades or lives throughout the visible world even as consciousness lives in all parts of the body of a creature. Brahm, being the cosmic Consciousness personified, is all-knowing and omniscient, and it covers the entire gamut of the visible world just like the individual living being who is conscious and wide awake becomes aware and knowledgeable about the world around him. [When a wise and intelligent creature is awake, he becomes aware of all the happenings around him. This is made possible because of the presence of the Atma inside his body. It is this Atma, the pure consciousness, that enables the otherwise inane and lifeless gross body to be alive, and be sensitive and receptive enough to be able to accept and understand the sense impulses received from the external world. Without the Atma the body would not know anything. If the Atma represents one single individual creature, Brahm would stand for the sum-total of all the Atmas in creation, and by implication this Brahm would represent the sum-total all knowledge that exists in this living creation. This is because Brahm is the 'consciousness' that exists at the macro level of creation, while Atma is the same consciousness at the micro level of the same creation. As soon as consciousness retracts itself from this world, the latter ceases to exist from all practical points of view. Therefore, Brahm is the protector of the entire visible world (because without Brahm or 'Consciousness', this world would be as good as dead) [9-10].

This macrocosmic form of the divine Brahm (cosmic Consciousness), personified as the Supreme Being, has nineteen metaphoric mouths (symbolised by the following—the 5 sense organs such as ear, eye, nose, tongue and skin + 5 organs of action such as hands, legs, mouth, excretory and genitals + 5 Prans or vital airs or winds such as Pran or main breath, Apaana, Vyan, Udaana and Samana + 4 Anthakarans or inner self such as Mana or mind, Buddhi or intellect, Chitta or sub-conscious and Ahankar or ego and pride = 19), whose limbs are the eight Lokas (consisting of Bhu, Bhurva, Swaha, Maha, Janaha, Tapaha, Satyam and Patal = 8), who is the undisputed supreme Lord ('Prabhu') of the entire world, who is revealed in the four states of existence known as Sthul or gross, Sukshma or subtle, Kaaran or causal, and Sakshi or the one who is a sole witness of everything—verily, the supreme transcendental and all-pervasive macrocosmic Brahm who has revealed himself as this vast and colossus creation is known as 'Vaishwanar Brahm<sup>2</sup>' or the Viraat Purush. [11]. (9-11).

[Note-- The 4 'Paads', or limbs, legs, aspects, facets or pedestals of Brahm—The four 'Paads' of Brahm are the four legs upon which Brahm stands. These four Paads symbolically establish the greatness and supremacy of Brahm as the all-powerful and all-controlling Authority in this creation. Since Brahm is the supreme Divinity that has revealed itself in the form of this creation, since each and every unit of creation is a manifestation of Brahm and without Brahm nothing exists, nothing has any relevance and truth (refer *Tripadvibhut Maha-Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph 1), it follows that the entire creation represents Brahm's four cosmic forms or aspects or facets—which are called the four legs or Paads of Brahm. This is a metaphoric way of saying that the supreme Brahm has manifested himself and is made known to this world by the means of these four mediums.

The four Paads of Brahm stand for the four states of existence of consciousness—viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Sushupta or deep sleep state, and the Turiya or transcendental state. This fact is affirmed in the Atharva Veda's *Tripadvibhut Maha-Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph 5; Canto 4, paragraphs 1-3.

Besides the present Upanishad, these four Paads of Brahm have been explained elsewhere in the following Upanishads also—(i) Sam Veda's *Chandogya Upanishad*, Canto 3, section 18, verse nos. 2-6, Canto 4, Section 5, verse no. 2, Canto 4, Section 6, verse no. 3, Canto 4, Section 7, verse no. 3, and Canto 4, Section 8, verse no. 3. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda's *Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 1. (iii) Atharva Veda's *Mandukya Upanishad*, verse nos. 3-7; *Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse nos. 4-7; *Tripadvibhut Maha-Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 1, paragraph 5; Canto 4, paragraph nos. 2-3, 6; Canto 8, paragraph no. 4; *Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 5-8; *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 5.

<sup>2</sup>*Vaishwanar Brahm*—The word 'Vaishwanar' refers to the all-pervading and all-encompassing macrocosmic form of Brahm. It is that aspect of Brahm which represents the whole 'Vishwa' or world, the visible creation. It is the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm and represents the sum total of all gross bodies in existence. It, more practically, refers to the Jagrat or waking aspect of consciousness because it is in this state that the individual becomes aware of the surrounding world; it is during the Jagrat state that the consciousness receives inputs from the world, the 'Vishwa', and establishes a contact with it. So, that aspect of Brahm that relates to the gross aspect of creation at the cosmic level is known as Vaishwanar Brahm.

This aspect is also known as the 'Viraat Purush' as the latter term refers to the all-pervading and all-encompassing form of Brahm at the macrocosmic level of creation. The entire creation is said to be formed from the body of this Viraat Purush. Or, it is this Viraat Purush who has metamorphosed himself in the form of the entire creation. Hence, one is inseparable from the other just like water and ocean.

Another term used in this context is 'Vaishnawar Purush' which is a combination of the two terms 'Vaishwanar Brahm' and 'Viraat Purush'.

Other reference: (i) Atharva Veda's *Mandukya Upanishad*, verse no. 3; *Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 4. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda's *Brahma Upanishad*, verse no. 21; *Pran Agnihotra Upanishad*, verse no. 15.]

विश्वजित्प्रथमः पादः स्वप्नस्थानगतः प्रभुः । सूक्ष्मप्रज्ञः स्वतोऽष्टाङ्ग एको नान्यः परंतपः ॥१२॥

viśvajitprathamah pādah svapnasthānagatah prabhuḥ /  
sūkṣmaprajñah svato'ṣṭāṅga eko nānyaḥ paraṁtapah // 12 //

12. Verily, the above described form of existence is the first Paad of the supreme transcendental Brahm.

[Now the second Paad is being narrated.]

The second state in which consciousness exists is known as Swapna or the dreaming state. This is the second Paad of the Atma at the microcosmic level of creation, and of Brahm at the macrocosmic level.

[The Swapna or dreaming state, as the name suggests, is when a creature imagines the presence of a world which has no physical existence. In this case, the physical gross body is asleep or inactive, as is the conscious aspect of the mind and intellect. Only the sub-conscious aspect of the mind is active, and the creature draws upon the data-bank of this sub-conscious mind to conjure up a fascinating world of virtuality. All knowledge that the consciousness gathered while in the Swapna state is not physical, and it exists only in the subtle level. This knowledge may be quite divergent from the knowledge of the Jagrat state. And this is the reason why the world of dreams is often very different from the world which exists in the waking state. Whereas the knowledge and the world during the Jagrat state is like the hard copy of anything, the world and knowledge of Swapna is like the soft copy. Whereas one can actually have the feel of the hard copy and its existence can be ascertained and protected, no one can feel the soft copy, and when the latter would vanish due to some software problem is most uncertain to say. But whereas the world during the Jagrat state has its own limits due to a variety of practical and physical factors, no such limitations are imposed in the subtle state and the consciousness can imagine things and create a world much more fascinating and colourful than actually possible in practice in the Jagrat state.]

The Atma (i.e. the creature's true self) that is conscious of existence of the world in its subtle form (as opposed to the gross and physical form) in the creature's dreaming state is the de-facto Lord of this state. [This is because it is the Atma that conjures up a world of dreams. If it so wants, it can exclude this state, and once the creature retires to rest and the body ceases to function, the consciousness can allow the mind to rest too. And when this happens the creature wouldn't dream. In other words, just like any kingdom is headed by a ruling monarch, the world of dreams is also headed by this subtle aspect of the Atma.]

And since Atma and Brahm are synonymous with each other, it is said that this subtle state of existence of consciousness, which is equivalent to the dreaming state of existence, or the Swapna state, is the second Paad or aspect of the cosmic Brahm.

Hence, Brahm or the cosmic Consciousness that exists in the dreaming state of existence and makes the creature aware of the subtle world that exists only virtually in one's dreams is called 'Sukshma Pragya Brahm'—i.e. Brahm that is manifested and known in its subtle form (as opposed to its gross form known as the Vishwa that exists in the Jagrat or waking state).

This Brahm also has the eight limbs or aspects as described earlier for the Vishwa or Viraat Brahm. [Refer verse no. 11.]

Oh the one who has done great Tapa (i.e. has done great austerity and penance; a reference to sage Narad)! This Brahm or consciousness in the form of the Atma is all alone in the Swapna state of existence. [And this is why this consciousness is called 'Prabhu' or Lord of this subtle state of dreams. The same epithet Prabhu was used in verse no. 11 to describe Brahm as the only Lord in the Jagrat or waking state of consciousness.] (12).

सूक्ष्मभुक् चतुरात्माथ तैजसो भूतराडयम् । हिरण्यगर्भः स्थूलोऽन्तर्द्वितीयः पाद उच्यते ॥१३॥

sūkṣmabhuk caturātmātha taijaso bhūtarādayam /  
hiraṇyagarbhaḥ sthūlo'ntardvītiyaḥ pāda ucyate // 13 //

13. This subtle and invisible aspect of Brahm or the 'Sukshma Brahm' (i.e. the consciousness that exists in the Swapna or dreaming state of existence) is the one who sustains and experiences the presence the presence of various Tattvas or elements as they exist in their subtle state or form. [The word 'Sukshma' means as small as the atom; minute, microscopic, subtle and so small that it is virtually invisible in creation.]

If this subtle Brahm or subtle consciousness that exists in the Swapna state is taken as having an independent existence, then it can also be said to have the four distinct states of existences as the gross aspect of Brahm did. [This subtle form consciousness in the dreaming state is said to have an independent existence because a world of dreams is an independent world, complete in its self in all respects. While a creature dreams, he behaves just like he would do in the real world—he has relations, he does so many deeds, he cries and laughs, he goes here and there, he loves and hates, he eats and fasts, and so on. Except for the fact that the physical gross body with its natural limitations is not involved, there is not much of a difference between the actual world of the waking state and the world of dreams. These two worlds are like independent worlds having separate existence. For instance, whereas a man may be a pauper in the gross physical world of the Jagrat state, he might be a king in the Swapna world. Therefore, if the consciousness or Brahm or Atma can have four states of existence while in the Jagrat state, it can also have similar or equivalent number of forms in the Swapna state. These four states are symbolically—Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya. One might wonder, for instance, how a creature can be dreaming while already in the dreaming state. Well, since the 'world of dreams' is an independent world of its own, a creature can be awake in it, doing so many things, or he might sleep in this imaginary world just as well as he would have done while living in the physical world when he was actually awake. It must be noted that we are dealing with the analysis of Brahm, an entity that is unknown, most mysterious, enigmatic and esoteric, and like in science or mathematics we have to presume certain things based on known data, available information and experience in order to arrive at a definite conclusion about the unknown.]

The Atma or the individual's consciousness that exists in the Swapna state of existence is known as 'Taijas'. It is because it is magnificent, majestic, glorious and dynamic—virtues implied by the word 'Taijas'. [Why so? It is because whereas in the Jagrat state of existence the Atma was subject to the limitations of the gross body, no such boundaries exist in the Swapna state. The Atma in the Swapna or dreaming state is more dynamic and maverick and powerful, capable of achieving stupendous feats of astounding proportions that would be impossible for it to accomplish while in the Jagrat or waking state because of natural barriers of the physical body and the physical world which are gross in nature and have various sorts of natural limitations built in their texture.]

The consciousness that exists in the individual level of the creature, i.e. in the micro level of creation, is called Taijas as mentioned above, while the same consciousness when it is considered at the macro level of existence is known as 'Hiranyagarbha'. [The 'Hiranyagarbha' is therefore the sum total of all subtle bodies in creation.]

The previous form of cosmic Consciousness which is known as the Viraat or Vaishwanar is the gross aspect of the cosmic Brahm (refer verse nos. 10-11), while

the form known as Hiranyagarbha (as described in verse nos. 12-13) is the subtle aspect of the same cosmic Brahm.

This subtle form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Hiranyagarbha is the second Paad of the supreme Brahm (13).

कामं कामयते यावद्यत्र सुप्तो न कंचन । स्वप्नं पश्यति नैवात्र तत्सुषुप्तमपि स्फुटम् ॥१४॥

kāmaṁ kāmāyate yāvadyatra supto na kañcana /  
svapnaṁ paśyati naivātra tatsuṣuṣṭamapi sphuṭam // 14 //

14. [This verse describes the third state of consciousness known as Sushupta. This state of existence corresponds to the third Paad of Brahm.]

The living being in the Sushupta state of existence does not see any dreams and neither does he has any sort of wishes for enjoyment of any sense organs or objects. It is a state of dissolution when nothing exists and matters.

[Briefly, the Sushupta state is the deep sleep state of consciousness when even the sub-conscious mind goes into hibernation. With the mind and body both becoming defunct, the creature is neither awake nor dreaming. It exists in a state of neutrality or dissolution. Thus it experiences nothing of the physical world of the Jagrat state or the subtle world of the Swapna state.]

The cosmic Consciousness that exists in this state of complete dissolution known as Sushupta, is known as the Kaaran or the causal body. It is the sum total of all the causal bodies of creation. [As the word implies, this state of consciousness is the ‘causative factor’—or Kaaran—that gives rise to all other aspects or forms of existence of consciousness. It is from this neutral state that the other forms of conscious existence emerge. Hence, it is the ‘cause’ of coming into being the other states of consciousness such as the Swapna and the Jagrat. Therefore, this neutral and virtually dissolved state of consciousness is called the ‘Kaaran’ or the ‘causative’ aspect of the existence.] (14).

एकीभूतः सुषुप्तस्थः प्रज्ञानघनवान्सुखी । नित्यानन्दमयोऽप्यात्मा सर्वजीवान्तरस्थितः ॥१५॥

ekībhūtaḥ suṣuṣṭasthaḥ prajñānaghanavānsukhī /  
nityānandamayo’pyātmā sarvajīvāntarasthitaḥ // 15 //

15. In this primary form of Kaaran or causal body, the Consciousness is in a single form (i.e. it is still not revealed in its many connotations or varied aspects). It is unique and magnificent in its self. It is endowed with profound Gyan (knowledge). [This is because any entity that has knowledge can ever hope to be the cause of initiating any sort of action that results in the development of something afresh. An entity that has no knowledge would not be able to achieve anything in any field; mere ability is not enough. Knowledge is the driving force of any kind of activity and development. Since this Kaaran or causal body of the Consciousness is able to give rise to the other states of existence, since it can conjure up a fascinating world in its dreams, and then actually perceive this world in a physical, tangible form in the waking state, it is obvious that it has knowledge! Therefore, the consciousness residing in the causal body is not ignorant and stupid. Its knowledge, erudition, skill

and wisdom are so perfect that the creation it creates works like clock-work. For instance, the sun rises and sets at the precise time, the embryo takes a precise time to mature and take a birth, the egg hatches at the precise time. Movement of all celestial bodies are perfectly regulated. In spite of their being present in the vast void of space without any barriers to separate them physically, they do not collide with each other, and neither do they spin out of control and get lost in this void.]

It exists in a happy and eternally blissful state of existence. [This is because it has yet no worries of any kind, as the world—both the physical world of the Jagrat or waking state as well as the subtle world of the Swapna or dreaming state—is shut off. Since there are yet no perceptions, and since the mind that is the cause of all pain and miseries is still in a dissolved state, the consciousness exists in the blissful state of existence as long as it stays in the Kaaran body. It is only when it starts weaving the web representing this world that it gets restless and entangled just like a spider that trapped in the cobweb of its own creation.]

This consciousness is the one that lives in the inner self or the subtle heart of all living beings as their Atma which is their true and pure self (15).

तथाप्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः सर्वगतोऽव्ययः । चतुरात्मेश्वरः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादसंज्ञितः ॥१६॥

tathāpyānandabhuk cetomukhaḥ sarvagato'vyayaḥ /  
caturātmeśvaraḥ prājñastṛtīyaḥ pādasamjñitaḥ // 16 //

16. At the macrocosmic level of creation, this state of consciousness is equivalent to the Ishwar or the supreme Lord of creation. This Ishwar is therefore in an eternally blissful state.

The light of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment is the metaphoric mouth of this Ishwar. He is omnipresent and all-pervading. He is eternal, imperishable, steady, constant and irrefutable as well as the absolute Truth of creation.

This supreme Ishwar or Lord of creation is the one who has revealed himself in all the four forms in which consciousness exists in this creation (such as the Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya states)—and it is he who is known as ‘Pragya’ as well. [The Ishwar represents the sum total of all the causal bodies of creation at the cosmic level, while its counterpart at the level of the individual creature is known as Pragya. The word ‘Pragya’ literally implies one that knows, one that has knowledge, is wise, erudite and enlightened. All these are the characteristics of the Atma which is the pure consciousness in its primary form, and nothing else.]

Hence, Ishwar or Pragya stands for the third Paad of Brahm (the cosmic Consciousness) (16).

एष सर्वेश्वरश्चैष सर्वज्ञः सूक्ष्मभावनः । एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवार्प्ययौ ॥१७॥

eṣa sarveśvaraścaiṣa sarvajñaḥ sūkṣmabhāvanaḥ /  
eṣo'ntaryāmyeṣa yoniḥ sarvasya prabhavāpyayau // 17 //

17. [Verse no. 17 describes some of the eclectic virtues of the supreme Brahm.]

The supreme transcendental Brahm (described in the above verses) is the Lord of the entire creation and its inhabitant creatures, both the moving as well as those that

do not move. [The moving creatures are animals, insects, worms, birds and others belonging to the animal kingdom, while the immovable ones are the plants and some categories of living beings of the lower animal kingdom.]

Brahm is all-knowing and omniscient.

In his most subtle and sublime form, Brahm is the pure conscious ‘self’ known as the Atma that lives in the inner being or the subtle heart of all living beings.

Brahm is the cosmic ‘Yoni’ or womb in which the creation was conceived, where it developed, was nourished and from where it was finally produced—or created. Indeed, Brahm is the only cause for the creation, the development and the conclusion of this creation (17).

भूतानां त्रयमप्येतत्सर्वोपरमबाधकम् । तत्सुषुप्तं हि यत्स्वप्नं मायामात्रं प्रकीर्तितम् ॥१८॥

bhūtānāṃ trayamapyetatsarvoparamabādhakam /  
tatsuṣuptaṃ hi yatsvapnaṃ māyāmātraṃ prakīrtitam // 18 //

18. The ‘consciousness’ that is deemed to exist in the three states of existence known as the Jagrat world called the Vishwa, the Swapna world called the Taijas, and the Sushupta world called the Pragya, is basically the same entity that is always one, non-dual and immutable. [This Divinity is known as Brahm at the macro level, and the Atma at the micro level of creation.]

This misconception that the basically non-dual Brahm has three states of existence, or that the pure consciousness exists in three types of worlds (as outlined above) is at the root of all delusions and spiritual perplexities. This misconception is called Maya, and it is a constant hurdle in one’s spiritual elevation and enlightenment. In other words, the worlds created due to Maya cause confusions about the truthful nature of Brahm or Consciousness. Instead of helping one to realise the ‘truth’ it only causes consternations and perplexities.

Not only this, since delusions create an imaginary situation which is far removed from the truth, it follows that whatever is known and recognised as the world by the creature is actually like a Swapna or dream as far as his true ‘self’ the Atma is concerned (18).

चतुर्थश्चतुरात्मापि सच्चिदेकरसो ह्ययम् । तुरीयावसितत्वाच्च एकैकत्वानुसारतः ॥१९॥

caturthaścaturātmāpi saccidekaraso hyayam /  
turiyāvasitattvācca ekaikatvanusārataḥ // 19 //

19. Besides the three Paads of Brahm (as narrated in verse nos. 9-16) there is one more Paad which is above or superior to all of them. It is called the transcendental state of consciousness, or Turiya state of existence. This corresponds to the fourth Paad of Brahm as well as the Atma at the macro and the micro levels of existence respectively.

All the states in which the cosmic Consciousness exists are deemed to be incorporated in this Turiya state. The consciousness in the Turiya state is in a non-dual form, and it is from this single entity that all the other three states of existence emerge.



[It can be explained by taking the example of a post-graduate student who has completed his MA degree. It is assumed and taken for granted that he must have passed his graduate BA degree and earlier his school leaving exam if he has the MA degree. When he has completed his MA degree, it is assumed that he has the knowledge that is taught at the level of the school as well as at the graduate level. Similarly, the higher and superior transcendental state of consciousness known as Turiya is deemed to have been arrived at by a creature after having crossed the earlier three stages of Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupta. A Consciousness that exists in the Turiya state must have had an experience of what are Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupta states.] (19).

[Note—Besides this Canto, the four states of existence of consciousness have been explained in a number of Upanishads such as The four states of existence of the consciousness have been described in the following Upanishads amongst others—(a) Shukla Yajur Veda—Trishikhi Brahman Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 149-150; Brihad Aranyak Upanishad 2/1/16-20, 4/3/9-38; Subalo-panishad, Canto 4 full as well as Canto 9, verse no. 1-7; Paingalo-panishad, 2/11-16; Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, 2/4-2/5; Turiyateet Upanishad. (b) Krishna Yajur Veda tradition—Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 59-64, 72; Canto 4, verse no. 11-20; Brahmo-panishad, verse no. 1, 20-21; Kaivalya Upanishad, verse no. 12-14; Dhyan Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 93/12-93/15; Sarwasaar Upanishad, verse no. 4; Shaarirak Upanishad, verse no. 14; Brahm/Amrit Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 11. (c) Atharva Veda tradition—Mandukya Upanishad, verse nos. 3-7; Atharvashikha Upanishad; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 4-7; Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 1, 24-26; Canto 6, verse no. 3-4; Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 5-8; Param Hans Upanishad, paragraph no. 6.]

ओतानुज्ञात्रनुज्ञातृविकल्पज्ञानसाधनम् । विकल्पत्रयमत्रापि सुषुप्तं स्वप्नमान्तरम् । मायामात्रं विदित्वैवं सच्चिदेकरसो ह्यथ ॥२०॥

otānujñātranujñātrvikalpajñānasāadhanam /  
vikalpatrayamatrāpi suṣuptaṁ svapnamāntaram /  
māyāmātraṁ viditvaivaṁ saccidekaraso hyayam // 20 //

20. The earlier three states of existence of the consciousness that are deemed to be incorporated in the fourth state called Turiya are the following—‘Ot’, ‘Anugyat’ and ‘Anugya’. [Refer verse no. 3 of the present Canto 8 for elaboration.] They help one to analyse and understand the existence of the different aspects of the world and creation. But ultimately all come to a single point—and it is the non-dual nature of the consciousness as it exists in the eternally blissful Turiya state.

Just like the two states of existence (i.e. the Swapna or dreaming state as well as the Jagrat or waking state) being regarded as the delusory effect caused by Maya upon the pure consciousness that exists in the Sushupta state, it follows, by extension, that when the consciousness rises higher to the Turiya state then all the three states below it (i.e. the Sushupta, Swapna and Jagrat) are also the effect of Maya. [The Atma or pure consciousness of the creature in the Sushupta state is completely neutral. But under delusions it begins to think that it lives in a world of dreams or Swapna, and in the physical world of Jagrat. It oscillates between these three states because it is not certain which is true and which is false—refer Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse nos. 16-18, 34-35; and in Brahm Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda in its verse nos. 20-21. The Brahm/Amrit Bindu Upanishad,

verse no. 11 of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition describes the three states of existence of the consciousness as the Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupta. It goes on to affirm that ‘any person who is able to transcend these three states of existences, or who has reached the fourth state called the Turiya state of permanent beatitude and felicity, is the one who does not have another birth’. ‘Not having any more birth’ is a metaphoric way of saying that the creature or his ‘true self’, has attained eternity in the form of realisation that it is not an ordinary entity but cosmic Consciousness that exists in the Turiya state. This is a deemed permanent state of spiritual enlightenment where Maya (delusion) has no or little effect. As a result of this, the Consciousness remains free from the influence of delusions that create an imaginary world of dreams in the Swapna state, or the erroneous impression of reality of the world which the creature sees while it is awake in its Jagrat state. When the Atma is not deluded and does not have to live either of the two states—viz. the Swapna state of dreams or the Jagrat state of this illusionary world—it is virtually free from the notion of ‘birth’. This is because to live in either of these two worlds and interact with them the Atma must have a ‘body’, and once these two worlds are dispensed away this need does not arise. The Atma or Consciousness living in the Turiya state is in its primary form that is ‘pure and unadulterated consciousness’ which is all-knowing and free from delusions and ignorance. Refer also to our present Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 6, verse no. 4.]

Hence, a wise spiritual aspirant must understand and be convinced that there is only one non-dual supreme consciousness known as Brahm. It is most advisable for him to know this fact and overcome all delusions about this world and its existence (if he wishes his spiritual well-being, his spiritual liberation and deliverance, his emancipation and salvation) (20).’

विभक्तो ह्ययमादेशो न स्थूलप्रज्ञमन्वहम् । न सूक्ष्मप्रज्ञमत्यन्तं न प्रज्ञं न क्वचिन्मुने ॥२१॥  
 नैवाप्रज्ञं नोभयतः प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञमान्तरम् । नाप्रज्ञमपि न प्रज्ञाघनं चादृष्टमेव च ॥२२॥  
 तदलक्षणमग्राह्यं यदव्यवहार्यमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शिवं शान्तमद्वैतं  
 मन्यन्ते । स ब्रह्मप्रणवः स विज्ञेयो नापरस्तुरीयः सर्वत्र भानुवन्मुमुक्षूणामाधारः स्वयंज्योतिर्ब्रह्माकाशः  
 सर्वदा विराजते परंब्रह्मत्वादित्युपनिषत् ॥२३॥

vibhakto hyayamādeśo na sthūlaprajñāmanvaham /  
 na sūkṣmaprajñāmatyantaṃ na prajñāṃ na kvacinmune // 21 //  
 naivāprajñāṃ nobhayataḥprajñāṃ na prajñāmāntaram /  
 nāprajñāmapi na prajñāghanam cādrṣṭameva ca // 22 //  
 tadalakṣaṇamagrāhyaṃ  
 yadvyavahāryamacintyamavyapadeśyamekātmapratyayasāraṃ  
 prapañcōpaśamaṃ śivaṃ śāntamadvaitaṃ caturthaṃ manyante /  
 sa brahmapraṇavaḥ sa vijñeyo nāparasturiyaḥ sarvatra  
 bhānuvanmumukṣūṇāmādhāraḥ svayaṃjyotirbrahmākāśaḥ  
 sarvadā virājate paraṃbrahmatvādityupaniṣat // 23 //

21-23. Brahma reiterated once again— ‘Oh sage (Narad)! It is the declaration of the Vedas that the divine, sublime, holy and eclectic entity which is not the one that neither seems to know about the gross world as well as the subtle world nor is ignorant of them, that is neither highly knowledgeable nor is completely ignorant, that

neither has any awareness of the inner subtle world nor of the outer external gross world, that cannot be seen by the eyes (because it has no form and shape), that can never be grasped, held or understood, that can not be brought within the ambit of the physical world of material sense objects, that is beyond the purview of the mind and intellect so much so that it cannot be thought of, imagined and understood, that cannot be brought under any definitions, the only essential form of which is the authority known as the Atma or pure consciousness, in which there is no trace of Prapanch (delusions, deceit, conceit, confusions, falsehoods and illusions—collectively also known as Maya), which is an embodiment of the virtues called Shiva (i.e. one who is pure, truthful, wise, enlightened, dispassionate and holy), which is peaceful and serene, which is the only one of its kind, being unique and non-dual—verily, this divine entity known as the supreme transcendental Brahm has four Paads as narrated in the foregoing verses. This is what those who are wise, knowledgeable and learned assert and reiterate repeatedly.

This holy, divine and sublime cosmic entity that defies all understanding and definitions is known as Pranav Brahm. It is only this eclectic divine entity, to the exclusion of all other entities in this creation, that is worthy of realising and researching by the spiritual aspirant.

Like the celestial Sun that gives light and protects life in this creation, it is this Brahm that is the benevolent and munificent Lord of all those who seek emancipation and salvation.

The self-illuminated supreme Brahm is like the sky element. That is, Brahm is as vast, fathomless and all-encompassing as the sky. Nothing in existence lives outside the jurisdiction of Brahm just like nothing exists beyond the limits or boundaries of the sky.

Brahm is eternally omnipresent and all-pervading, and that is why it is called 'Param' or the Supreme One.

Verily, this is the great teaching of this Upanishad. It is the secret unravelled by this great Upanishad (21-23).

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### Updesh (teaching)/Canto 9

[This Canto outlines the divine form of the supreme transcendental Brahm.]

॥ नवमोपदेशः ॥

अथ ब्रह्मस्वरूपं कथमिति नारदः पप्रच्छ । तं होवाच पितामहः हिं ब्रह्मस्वरूपमिति ।  
अन्योऽसावन्योऽहमस्मीति ये विदुस्ते पशवो न स्वभावपशवस्तमेवं ज्ञात्वा विद्वान्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते  
नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥१॥

atha brahmasvarūpaṃ kathamiti nāradaḥ papraccha /  
 taṃ hovāca pitāmahaḥ kiṃ brahmasvarūpamiti /  
 anyo'sāvanyo'hamasmīti ye viduste paśavo na svabhāvapaśavastamevaṃ  
 jñātvā vidvānmṛtyumukhātpramucyate nānyaḥ panthā vidyate'yanāya // 11 //

1. Sage Narad once again asked the great grandfather of creation, Brahma—‘Oh Lord! What are the truthful form, nature, identity and appearance of Brahm? Please be kind to elaborate upon this most eclectic but enigmatic divine entity.’

Brahma replied—‘Oh son Narad! What or who else is Brahm other than one’s own true ‘self’ known as the Atma, which is pure consciousness. Those who think that Brahm and I are two separate entities are no better than animals. [Here, the pronoun ‘I’ applies to one’s true identity, which is not the gross body but the sublime consciousness that lives in the subtle heart as the Atma.]

Who is an animal (a ‘Pashu’)? Those people who are mentally like an animal are no different from a creature that is physically born from the womb of an animal (i.e. who has the physical body of an animal). [In other words, those people who live a life being a serf of their urges and instincts, who are dominated by the various Vasanas and Vrittis or natural passions and habits, who have no control over their sense organs, who have a low level of wisdom and intelligence and live only to gratify their bodies and enjoy the creature comforts and pleasures of this material world, who are not bothered about the welfare of their Spirit and think of merry-making while this body lasts, who do not understand that there is a higher state of existence than the one in which they live at present, who do not pay heed to the eclectic teaching of the scriptures thinking that they are imaginary creations of insane minds, whose life has a preponderance of Tama Guna and riddled by various Vikaars or faults and shortcomings enumerated in Canto 3, verse nos. 33, 90, Canto 4, verse nos. 5-6, who lack the eclectic virtues enumerated in Canto 3, verse nos. 21 and 24, as well as in Canto 4, verse nos. 10-12—indeed such people are like animals. There is no difference between them and another creature which we like to call an ‘animal’.]

Hence, those wise, learned, erudite and enlightened men who recognise and understand the Brahm as the supreme divine cosmic entity that has revealed itself as the Atma of all living beings as well as all the physical forms that this Atma assumes in this creation (in the form of myriad creatures)—well, such men are the ones who find freedom from the fear and fetter of death. [This is because they have not to fear from any creature in this creation; because they would have realised that what dies is the physical gross body which is nevertheless perishable and impermanent, and not the Atma which is eternal and imperishable; because they would have understood that their ‘true self’ being the Atma never dies just like Brahm never dies, and therefore there is no cause of any fear from death. Refer also verse no. 11 of this present Canto 9.]

Indeed, it is only the eclectic and divine knowledge of the supreme Authority that is the only Absolute Truth in creation, and which is nothing but pure Consciousness that is all-pervading and all-inclusive, that is capable of providing Mukti (liberation, deliverance) to the enlightened living being (1).

कालः स्वभावो नियतिर्यदृच्छा भूतानि योनिः पुरुष इति चिन्त्यम् ।  
 संयोग एषां न त्वात्मभावादात्मा ह्यनीशः सुखदुःखहेतो ॥२॥

kālaḥ svabhāvo niyatiryadṛcchā bhūtāni yoniḥ puruṣa iti cintyam /  
saṃyoga eṣāṃ na tvātmabhāvādātmā hyaṇīśaḥ sukhaduḥkhaheṭoḥ // 2 //

2. One must ponder deeply on the question as to what amongst the following is the cause of this world—whether it is the factor of time and circumstance or the prevailing situation, whether it is the creature's natural habits, temperaments and traits, whether it is the deeds done with specific aims, objectives or targets to be achieved, whether it is some coincidence, an accidental occurrence or some unpredictable and spur-of-the-moment motivation, whether it is one of the five Bhuts (i.e. the primary elements such as sky, air, fire, water and earth) or a combination of more than one of them, whether it is the Jivatma or the living being himself?

Now, when all these possibilities are analysed, the wise ones come to the conclusion that neither the time or circumstance nor the other factors listed above can be the independent cause of this world because all of them are dependent upon and subservient to the Atma, the pure consciousness.

Similarly, the Jivatma or the living being also cannot be the cause of this world because it is dependent upon the affects of the deeds done by it in the past life (or time), which in turn determines the Jivatma's state of existence or affairs in the current time, causing so many sorrows or joys for it. So the world, and its circumstances of either sorrows or happiness as it exists at present, is not created by the Jivatma on its own in its current life (2).

ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन्देवात्मशक्ति स्वगुणैर्निगूढाम् ।  
यः कारणानि निखिलानि तानि कालात्मयुक्तान्यधितिष्ठत्येकः ॥३॥

te dhyānayogānugatā apaśyandevātmaśakti svaguṇairnigūḍhām /  
yaḥ kāraṇāni nikhilāni tāni kālātmayuktānyadhitiṣṭhatyekāḥ // 3 //

3. Wandering then about the real cause of this world, the wise and learned sages and seers meditated, and in their mind's depth they got a divine glimpse or vision of the supreme dynamic power of creation, called the supreme Brahm, that warps and wafts throughout this creation, that is all-pervading and all-encompassing in creation, that is omnipresent and omnipotent in creation. This Brahm covers everything from the minute Atma (the Consciousness that is most subtle and smaller than an atom) to the colossus Kaal (the endless and fathomless Time). Therefore, this Brahm rules over and is the causative factor of all the other factors listed as various options earlier (in verse no. 2) (3).

तमेकस्मिन्निवृत्तं षोडशान्तं शतार्धरं विंशतिप्रत्यराभिः ।  
अष्टकैः षड्भिर्विश्वरूपैकपाशं त्रिमार्गभेदं द्विनिमित्तैकमोहम् ॥४॥

tamekasmiṃstrivṛtaṃ ṣoḍaśāntaṃ śatārdhāraṃ viṃśapratityarābhiḥ /  
aṣṭakaiḥ ṣaḍbhirviśvarūpaikapāśaṃ trimārgabhedaṃ  
dvinimittaikamoham // 4 //

4. These meditating sages and seers had a divine glimpse of a magnificent cosmic Wheel (representing creation) spinning majestically, and their wisdom and intellect helped them to correctly interpret the meaning and significance of this Wheel<sup>1</sup>.

This wheel had one 'Nemi' or the rim (circumference of the wheel), three 'Vrittis' or fastening circles that surround the central axle and hold the spokes of the wooden wheel in place (or it might also refer to the three tiers of rings or fasteners used in the wheel to tie its spokes and other parts)<sup>2</sup>, sixteen 'Antas' or ends or extremities<sup>3</sup>, fifty 'Araas' or spokes<sup>4</sup>, twenty 'Praytaars' or counter spokes<sup>5</sup>, six 'Ashtaks' or six sets of eight factors that strengthen it<sup>6</sup>, a single 'Pash' or a leash representing the entire creation which is used as a symbolic belt to tie the entire structure together.

This wheel is driven to its one destination<sup>7</sup> along three different paths varying from one another, and hence called 'Trimaarga Bhed'<sup>8</sup>. One round of this rotating wheel gives the delusion of two<sup>9</sup>—that is, it is out of delusion that the wheel rotating in one direction appears to be rotating in the opposite direction as well (4).

[Note—The concept of this creation being compared to a *giant wheel* has been cited and explained at other places in the Upanishads, the most similar one to the present verse in its narration being in the Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 4, 6; Canto 6, verse nos. 1-3 of Krishna Yajur Veda. A similar discussion also occurs in the Atharva Veda's Prashna Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 11; Canto 6, verse no. 6; Mundak Upanishad, Mundak (Canto) 2, section 2, verse no. 6; and Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 2-7; as well as in the Shukla Yajur Veda's Paingalo-panishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 3-4.

<sup>1</sup>The *one rim* stands for the 'Avyakta', i.e. that entity which is un-manifest and beyond comprehension but is at the core and form the cause of the rest of the things to have their basis and existence. It also stands for 'Prakriti' which is also called Avyakta because it is not verifiably, it is un-manifest, invisible and cannot be seen directly but can only be deduced by interpretation and implication.

<sup>2</sup>The *three tiers or fasteners* are the three Gunas or qualities that form the nature and basic temperament of a man. These are Sata or the best form defined by being righteous, auspicious, noble and proper; Raja which is the medium quality marked by worldly desires, passions and activity; and Tama which is the meanest and lowliest of the three and is characterised by perversions, inertia, ignorance etc.

<sup>3</sup>The *sixteen ends or extremities* are the eleven organs (five organs of perception—eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin + five organs of action—hands, legs, mouth, genitals and excretory + one mind) and the five elements (space/sky, air/wind, fire/energy, water and earth).

<sup>4</sup>The *fifty spokes* of this wheel are the five misconceptions, twenty-eight disabilities, nine contentments, and eight accomplishments or Siddhis.

The *five misconceptions* called Viparyayas are the following—(1) 'Tama' which makes one think that the body is the pure self; the mistaken notion that what is non-self is the self. (2) 'Moha' which is the endearment for or infatuation with the sensual material objects of the artificial world. (3) 'Mahamoha' literally the great Moha is the high of delusions when one thinks that the world is real. (4) 'Taamisra' when one gets angry if the desired objects are not obtained. (5) 'Andha Taamisra' is the blindness that comes in the wake of failure at fully enjoying the obtained objects of desire. For example, having to leave a meal midway due to an urgent call from the office; it leaves one frustrated and angry.

The *twenty-eight disabilities* or 'A-shaktis' are the following—eleven are related to the eleven organs as stated above, nine are related internally to the Anthakaran which are nine kinds of discontent as opposed to the nine kinds of contentment described below, and eight disabilities which are related to the inability to achieve the eight Siddhis described below.

The *nine kinds of contentment* or 'Tushti' are to be always satisfied with what one already has and not to yearn for more. They are—contentment from the knowledge of Nature (such as the study of sciences), contentment from material gains, contentment from time (because time is a great healing factor and such people derive consolation that the worst of time would pass one day), contentment from good fortune (because many people believe that good luck is round the corner), contentment from renunciation, dispassion and detachment (which is however the best form of contentment), contentment from desisting from activity not out of renunciation but because one feels that all activity would bring with it some gain and then it would be difficult to maintain it, so it is better avoided), contentment from being satisfied with whatever one has because one feels that whatever material thing is gained is perishable and would bring in its wake pain and sorrows, contentment from being satisfied with what one has because one thinks that the more one acquires the more the desires go on increasing, and contentment from the thought that no gain is possible without causing even a little harm to others, so it is better not to desire anything at all.

The *eight achievements or accomplishments* or Siddhis are the especial mystical authority and supernatural powers that one possesses. These are—(1) 'Uha' or the intuitive knowledge, skills and powers that one is born with. (2) 'Shabda' or the power of acquiring knowledge and skill just by listening to words instead of actually reading and mugging up of texts. (3) 'Adhyayan' or studying deeply and with concentration to acquire knowledge and skills. (4-6) 'Dukh-Vighaatam' or the abilities to eliminate sorrows and sufferings. There are three sorrows that affect a man—viz. (4) sorrows that originate from external and perceivable sources; they are called 'Ahbhautik', (5) sorrows that come from unknown phenomenal sources such as malignant stars and non-favourable Gods; called 'Adhidaivak', and (6) sorrows that have their origin in the body and the mind; called 'Adhyatmik'. (7) Then comes the seventh Siddhis which is 'Shurid Prapti' or receiving the fortunate company of someone who is compatible and like a soul-mate for the person, as opposed to the company of pervert and tormenting people. (8) And finally, 'Daan' or ability to give which implies that a person has sufficient for himself; it also implies that the person has an inherent noble nature and a renunciate and compassionate temperament.

So these are the so-called fifty spokes of the wheel representing Brahm.

<sup>5</sup>The *twenty counter-spokes* are the ten organs (five of action and five of perception) and their corresponding objects such as sound (ear), colour and shape (eye), taste (tongue), touch (skin), smell (nose), speech (mouth), walking or moving or going to a place (legs), grasping or accepting anything (hands), droppings (excretory), and enjoying sensual pleasures (genitals).

These literally act as 'fasteners or belts' that hold or fix the above fifty spokes in place.

<sup>6</sup>Next comes the *six sets of eight factors called Ashtaks*. These are the following—(1) 'Prakriti-Ashtakam' or the eight-fold nature of Prakriti; it consists of the five elements (sky, air, fire, water and earth) + mind + intellect + Ahankar (ego, pride). (2) 'Dhatu- Ashtakam' or the eight factors that sustain the outer body—outer skin (charma), inner skin (tvak), blood (rakta), flesh (mangsa), fat (medha), bones (asthi), marrow (majjaa) and semen or mucous (shukra). (3) 'Astha-Aishwariya' or the eight majesties and glories that are symbolic of the great mystical powers that a man possesses—'Anima' or the power to become as small as an atom; 'Mahima' or the capacity to become huge and majestic like a colossus; 'Garima' or to become authoritative, dignified, assertive and a heavy-weight; 'Laghima' or to have humility and simplicity inspite of being powerful and potent; and 'Prapti' or the ability to acquire anything desired. (4) 'Bhav- Ashtakam' refers to the various eight states of the mind and the corresponding virtues and vices. These are the following—'Dharma' or righteousness, probity, propriety, and nobility of thoughts and conduct, as well as its opposite component called 'Adharma'; 'Gyan' or truthful knowledge

and erudition, wisdom and enlightenment as well as its opposite component called ‘Agyan’; ‘Vairagya’ or renunciation, detachment and dispassion as well as its opposite component called ‘Raga or A-vairagya’; ‘Aishwarya’ or having material prosperity, lordship, majesty, magnificence, renown and pelf as well as its opposite component called ‘A-aishwarya or non-aishwarya’ or poverty and lack of renown. It is obvious that each of these virtues affects the mental bearing of different persons in different ways. (5) ‘Deva-Ashtakam’ or the eight kinds of celestial beings. These are the following—Brahma the creator, Prajapati the guardian of the visible creation created by Brahma, the Gods, the Gandharvas (heavenly musicians), Yakshas (semi-gods; like Kuber the treasurer of the Gods), Rakshas (the demons), Pittars (spirits of dead ancestors), and Pishach (monsters and ghouls). All these entities have supernatural powers. (6) ‘Guna-Ashtakam’ or the eight qualities. These are Daya or compassion and mercy; Kshma or forgiveness; Anasuya or freedom from jealousy, hatred and ill-will; Shauch or purity and immaculacy; Anaayaasa or freedom from fatigue and indolence; Akirpanya or generosity and magnanimity or lack of miserliness; and Aspriha or lack of craving or yearning for sensual pleasures.

<sup>7</sup>The *one destination* of this wheel is to take the creature to its home called Brahm where its soul would find its eternal resting place. Another interpretation is that the entire wheel representing this world revolves around one thing—and this is ‘desire’. This basic desire assumes three forms—viz. Satvic or noble desires, Rajsic or that which pertains to worldly gains, and Tamsic or that which deals with all that is evil and pervert. These desires are called ‘Vishwa-rupaika Paasham’ because they tie the creature in their ‘Paash’ or fetters represented by the desires for the enjoyments offered by the world of material sense objects, its pleasures and comforts.

<sup>8</sup>The *three Paths* along which the wheel is driven are represented by—‘Dharma’ or the path of righteousness and virtuousness, ‘A-dharma’ or non-Dharma or the path of evil and perversions, and ‘Gyan’ or the path of knowledge and erudition, of wisdom and enlightenment.

<sup>9</sup>It will be observed in practical life that when a wheel rotates at speed in a clockwise direction for example, it gives an impression that the spokes are turning in an anti-clockwise direction. This is due to optical illusion. In the present example, each *revolution* of the wheel gives rise to *two types of delusions*—such as good and bad, sorrows and happiness, etc. These opposite sets of notions are called ‘delusions’ because in actual fact the world where they are felt, the mind and the body which feel them are all delusory and have no truthful existence. The real entity that exists is one, and it is the pure consciousness known as the Atma at the micro level of creation, or Brahm at the macro level of creation. The rest is all delusion.]

पञ्चस्रोतोम्बुं पञ्चयोन्युग्रवक्त्रां पञ्चप्राणोर्मिं पञ्चबुद्ध्यादिमूलाम् ।  
पञ्चावर्ता पञ्चदुःखौघवेगां पञ्चाशब्देदां पञ्चपर्वामधीमः ॥५॥

pañcasrotombuṃ pañcayonyugravaktrāṃ  
pañcaprāṇormiṃ pañcabuddhyādimūlām /  
pañcāvartāṃ pañcaduḥkhaughavegāṃ  
pañcaśadbhedāṃ pañcaparvāmadhīmaḥ // 5 //

5. We know of a great river<sup>1</sup> that is fed by five streams<sup>2</sup>—i.e. there are five streams that pour into it as it moves ahead from its point of origin. This causes turbulence in the river at these five points where the streams join it because the current of waters of different streams clash with each other, thereby bending the normal path of the river at five points<sup>3</sup>. The five Prans or vital winds form the five types of waves of this river<sup>4</sup>.



This five-faceted river has however one point of origin like all great rivers have, and in this case it is the Buddhi or intellectual mind<sup>5</sup>.

The river has five types of whirlpools<sup>6</sup> swirling in it and trapping whatever comes within their range. There are five rapids<sup>7</sup> in this turbulent and tossing river. It has five aspects or branches or tributaries<sup>8</sup>. And it is said to have fifty segments or sectors<sup>9</sup> along its banks. [The mysterious river referred here is the world which is as turbulent, moving, unstable, unpredictable and trapping as the five-faceted river having five streams pouring into it, along with its whirlpools, waves, branches and rapids.] (5).

[Note—An exact similar narration is found in the Shewtashwatar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 1, verse no. 5.

<sup>1</sup>The *Great River* referred here is the world which is as turbulent, as topsy-turvy, as entrapping, as fearsome and as ever-changing as this river.

<sup>2</sup>The *five streams* represent the five organs of perceptions such as the eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin of the body of the creature. This is because the creature receives the numerous stimuli from the external world through these five organs. These stimuli disturb his normal peace of mind and keep it in constant state of agitation and flux; the creature cannot find peace as long as the organs of perception continue to receive perceptions from the world and fill the mind with their inputs. This is the reason of the *turbulence* referred in this verse. It must be noted that this world exists and has relevance only till the time the creature is alive and living in it. Hence, the world is synonymous with the creature that is engrossed in it and becomes an inseparable part of it. There is no world if there is no one to inhabit it.

<sup>3</sup>Further, the pouring in of the five streams into one body of the river and becoming one with it refers to the five primary elements that have independent existence like these five streams but merge with each other to form the body of the creature as well as the world. These five elements are sky, air, fire, water and earth. Each of these five elements has its own characteristic defining qualities, virtues and attributes, so when they mix into one body it is obvious that they would create a great deal of turmoil represented by the turbulence. They would affect the original nature of the creature's 'self' by forcing him to bend himself according to the demands of the body and the world in which the creature lives. The creature with a gross body cannot remain immune to the demands of the body—which is tantamount to bending and twisting the straightforward nature of the creature's 'true self' and giving it a tainted form. This is referred here by the *bending of the river at five points*. These five elements do not allow the Atma of the creature to retain its pristine pure form, but force it to adapt to its new habitat in the gross body made up of these five elements.

The fact that mixing of these five elements would create a lot of agitation for the Atma of the creature is easy to understand when we realise the consequences of mixing opposite forces of Nature. For instance, the water is cool by nature but the fire is hot, so when they mix together it is natural that there would be a lot of noise and fury. This can be easily verified when we pour water in a brightly lit fire—there is a tremendous amount of noise, hissing, spluttering, cracking, as well as a dense cloud of smoke, flying of dry ash, dust, powdered cinder and sparklers.

<sup>4</sup>The *five waves* are the five vital winds present in the body of all living creatures—viz. Pran (breath), Apaana (the wind that controls digestion and excretion), Samaana (wind responsible for circulation and equal distribution of nourishment in the body), Vyan (wind which maintains equilibrium), and Udaana (which helps the body to get up and move about). They are likened to the wave because like the wave which forms an integral part of the turbulent river, this active and agile body is also moved around and kept as such because of the presence of the vital winds inside its body. In the river also, waves rise only when the placid water is pummelled by gusts of strong wind; otherwise the river would flow calmly.

<sup>5</sup>The *one causative factor* which has resulted in the origin of the river is basically a glacier. In the present context in which the metaphor of the river has been cited to represent the world and its inhabitant creature, this one causative factor is the 'intelligent mind' or *Buddhi* because it is the mind that makes the creature aware of the external world and its material attractions, its comforts and pleasures, thereby creating in him a desire to acquire them and get sucked in the vortex of desires and more desires. The creature gets involved in numerous deeds and then expects results from these deeds, thereby getting trapped in the cycle of birth and death. If the mind decides that everything is false then the very cause of all upheavals and turmoil just vanish from existence and this river-like life of the creature would be led along in a tranquil and calm path like the easy flowing, placid and calm water of the river which is not in spate.

<sup>6</sup>The *five whirlpools* are the five sense objects pertaining to the five sense perceptions such the object of that the eyes sees, the objects that the ears hears about, the objects that the nose smells, the objects that the tongue tastes, and the objects that the skin touches and feels. These objects create desires and attraction for themselves and keep the creature trapped in their vice-like grip. They are likened to the whirlpool as they keep the creature churned, going round and round in circles, continuously tossing and turning helplessly under their influence, and gradually sinking in their vortex-like trap. These perceptions encircle the creature like the tentacles of an octopus which suck the creature in, and completely drown it in the water of the river. It means that the creature gets so much hooked to the enticing attractions of the material world and its alluring charms that he just cannot get out of their vice-like grip once he falls in their clasp.

<sup>7</sup>The *five rapids* are the *five types of miseries and sorrows* that afflict all creatures in this world. These are related to the creature staying in the mother's womb which is like a hellish experience, the agonies of birth, various diseases that he has to suffer in life, old age, and death.

<sup>8</sup>The *five aspects or branches* of this symbolic river are Agyan (ignorance), Ahankar (false pride, ego, haughtiness, arrogance and hypocrisy), Raag (attractions, attachments, love and affections for worldly things), Dwesh (ill wills, malice, animosity, enmity, hatred and spite) and Bhaye (fear) of dying or the desire to cling to life. In other words, even as a river appears to have different forms such as turbid, muddy, clear, frothy, milky white or greenish at different places due to a variety of reasons, this world also appears to have these five types of basic characteristics that determine how it looks to the creature. For example, if the element of Ahankar is the dominant factor in a man then he would have a particular take on this world which would be very different as compared to how a humble and selfless man treats the same world.

<sup>9</sup>The *fifty segments or sectors* represent the uncountable variations in the Vrittis of the Antahakaran or the inner self. These Vrittis are the various types of characters, qualities, virtues and attributes that decide what kind of world would be created by the creature around itself. This net result in which the world shapes itself vis-à-vis the creature as well as the basic character and personality of the individual creature itself would be the composite effect of all the above mentioned factors taken together. This is because this world is not an isolated unit but a composite mosaic of so many factors.

In practice also we observe that long rivers have many local names and significance. At places it is a holy river, while at others it is simply a flowing stream. Even as a holy river, some use its water to offer oblations to the Gods while others wash dirty clothes in it and spit in its water. At places it is calm and at others it causes havoc when it is in spate. Somewhere it is like an almost dry thin streak of water, while at other places it inundates large tracts of land. At places it is ankle shallow while at other places it can sink a boat load of passengers. The diversity of the river is starker than the ocean.]

सर्वाजीवे सर्वसंस्थे बृहन्ते तस्मिन्हंसो भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रे ।  
पृथगात्मानं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा जुष्टस्तस्तेनामृतत्वमेति ॥६॥

sarvājīve sarvasaṁsthe bṛhante tasminhaṁso bhrāmyate brahmacakre /  
pṛthagātmānaṁ preritāraṁ ca matvā juṣṭastatastenāmṛtatvameti // 6 //

6. The Jivatma or the living being keeps on revolving trapped in this giant wheel of creation that is called the Brahm Chakra<sup>1</sup> which is rotated by the Supreme Being.

Under the hallucinating and disorienting effect caused by the constant rotation of this giant wheel in which the creature or the Jivatma is trapped, the latter begins to think that 'he' (i.e. the Jivatma, or the living being or the creature) and the Parmatma (the Supreme Being, the supreme Atma or the cosmic Soul) are two distinct and separate entities. [When the creature is subjected to constant turning of the wheel of creation, i.e. when he is buffeted and tossed around like a boat in a rough ocean by a never-ending chain of miseries and joys that dog him in each of his births that he has to take as a result of the deeds done by him in the previous life, he loses his bearings, his orientation and a sense of direction. He begins to hallucinate and have a topsy-turvy view of the reality. In the mental upheaval the creature forgets what the scriptures such as the Vedas say about his own individual 'truthful self' and the supreme 'self' known as Brahm. He forgets that in reality they are the same 'consciousness' existing in two planes—as the 'Jivatma' at the microcosmic level, and as the 'Parmatma' at the macrocosmic level of creation respectively. It's like the element 'fire', for instance, that is the same whether it is in the form of the sacred fire of the sacrifice or as the fire of the household hearth. The illusion of duality is likened to the fact that a rapidly turning wheel creates the false impression that its spokes are turning in the opposite direction to the rotation of the wheel. Refer the concluding stanza of verse no. 4 above.]

But once the creature closes his eyes and calms himself down, once he shuts off the revolving world around him, he would be able to stabilise himself and regain his orientation and bearings. [Another instance to illustrate this phenomenon would be the case when a man goes round and round in circles. A short time later, the room around him begins to turn in circles too, and even if he stops to turn the room would continue to rotate around him for quite some time. But is the wall of the room actually moving? Of course not. It takes some time for the room to stop rotating after the man has himself stopped turning. When this analogy as well as of the one of the giant wheel is applied to the creature and his perception of the world it is obvious that as long as the former continues to perceive the latter it is impossible for the creature to eliminate the world and its attendant delusions. Herein comes the importance of meditation and contemplation wherein the creature turns inwards and shuts off the external world. It is like closing the eyes in the example of a turning wheel or a man turning in circles. After some time, the mind stabilises and the deluding affects of the world begins to fade away. It is then that the creature realises the 'truth'. It is like the world stopping from rotating in circles when the wheel stops or the room stopping to move in circles after the man stops turning himself. Hence, a wise and enlightened Jivatma is one who has overcome delusions and misconceptions about the world, about himself, and about the Parmatma.]

Therefore, when all delusions are removed, when the wise creature is able to understand what the hidden almighty dynamic cosmic force that is keeping this wheel

of creation moving is, when he has realised that this cosmic force is called ‘Consciousness’, and that his own Atma is the same ‘consciousness’ that resides in his body, the creature is said to have obtained access to Amrit, the elixir of eternity, beatitude and felicity, the elixir of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment (6).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *Brahm Chakra* has been described in Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 6 of Krishna Yajur Veda, while the same Upanishad describes the *Brahm Chakra* in relation to the cycle of deeds and their effects, called the *Karma Chakra* in its Canto 6, verse nos. 1-3. Briefly the phrase means the wheel of creation that is rotated and kept in motion by Brahm, the Supreme Being.]

उद्गीथमेतत्परमं तु ब्रह्म तस्मिन्स्त्रियं स्वप्रतिष्ठाक्षरं च ।

अत्रान्तरं वेदविदो विदित्वा लीनाः परे ब्रह्मणि तत्परायणाः ॥७॥

udgīthametatparamaṁ tu brahma tasmimstrayaṁ svapratisthākṣaraṁ ca /  
atrāntaraṁ vedavido veditvā līnāḥ pare brahmaṇi tatparāyaṇāḥ // 7 //

7. The Brahm described by the Vedas is the Supreme Being and the only absolutely truthful, eternal and imperishable entity in creation.

It is in this holy and divine Brahm that all the three Lokas (worlds) are incorporated. This is simply because nothing exists outside of Brahm, and it is Brahm that has revealed itself in everything that has come into being. [The three worlds referred to are the terrestrial world, the heavens and the nether world. It also refers to the past, the present and the future, as well as the three states in which the consciousness exists—viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming and the Sushupta or deep sleep states.]

Those who are well steeped in the tenets and the philosophy of the Vedas are able to see (realise) that this supreme, sublime, divine and eclectic cosmic Brahm resides in their own subtle heart in the form of the Atma, which is pure consciousness. So they do not have to search the Lord somewhere outside as he lives in their own bosom as their ‘true self’ known as the Atma.

With this grand and glorious realisation they lose any sense of distinction between their ‘self’ and the supreme Brahm, and consequentially become one with the latter. In other words, all dichotomies and sense of duality are destroyed, and instead a universal and uniform sense of non-duality is established (7).

संयुक्तमेतत्क्षरमक्षरं च व्यक्ताव्यक्तं भरते विश्वमीशः ।

अनीशश्चात्मा बध्यते भोक्तृभावाज्ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः ॥८॥

saṁyuktametatkṣaramakṣaraṁ ca vyaktāvyaktaṁ bharate viśvamīśaḥ /  
anīśāścātmā badhyate bhoktr̥bhāvājñātvā devaṁ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ // 8 //

8. The almighty and only Lord of this world is the one who bears, sustains, protects and regulates the entire world—both the visible as well as the invisible world, both the perishable gross world as well as the imperishable subtle Atma which is the true ‘self’ of the Jivatma.

Since the Jivatma or the living being is the one who is the enjoyer of the material sense objects of the gross world depending upon his individual Prakriti or the Jivatma’s inherent nature such as his natural desires, instincts, temperaments, habits

and inclinations, the former becomes bonded to the latter. [That is, since enjoyment of the world is dependent upon the Prakriti or nature of any individual, the latter is symbolically tied down by the former as far as any involvement with the world is concerned.]

On the other hand, when the Jivatma becomes self-realised and enlightened, when he discovers who he actually is and what is his status vis-à-vis the supreme Brahm—that is, when an individual realises that his ‘true self’ is the Atma that is pure consciousness, and that it is the same cosmic Consciousness which is known as Brahm—he becomes free from the bondage created by Prakriti as well as the delusions created by this world (8).

ज्ञाज्ञौ द्वावजावीशानीशावजा ह्येका भोक्तृभोगार्थयुक्ता ।  
अनन्तश्चात्मा विश्वरूपो ह्यकर्ता त्रयं यदा विन्दते ब्रह्म हेतत् ॥९॥

jñājñau dvāvajāvīśānīśāvajā hyekā bhoktr̥bhogārthayuktā /  
anantaścātmā viśvarūpo hyakartā trayam yadā vindate brahma hyetat // 9 //

9. There are two states of existence—one that is all-knowing and omniscient, and the other that is ignorant and deluded; one that is omnipotent and almighty, and the other that is the opposite. The former state of existence represents the eternal Atma that is synonymous with Brahm, and the latter represents the Jiva or the creature devoid these qualities.

Besides these two there is third state, and it is known as ‘Prakriti’ (Nature at the macrocosmic level and the creature’s own nature at the individual or microcosmic level). This Prakriti represents the dynamic power or active principal force or ‘Shakti’ of Brahm.

The supreme Brahm has no end, is a personification or an embodiment of all the forms and virtues that exist in this creation, and is free from the ego and pride associated with the ability of doing anything. [That is, though Brahm is the divine entity that has endless powers of accomplishing everything in this creation, including the ability of creating this world, sustaining it and concluding it to recreate it once again, he is never proud of these stupendous capabilities.]

When a wise spiritual aspirant understands the three aspects of Brahm as described herein above (i.e. as the Jiva, as the Parmatma, and as the Prakriti along with the world created by it), he is freed from all the fetters of delusions and ignorance that tie down ordinary creatures (9).

क्षरं प्रधानममृताक्षरं हरः क्षरात्मानावीशते देव एकः ।  
तस्याभिध्यानाद्योजनात्तत्त्वभावाद्भूयश्चान्ते विश्वमायानिवृत्तिः ॥१०॥

kṣaram pradhānamamṛtākṣaram haraḥ kṣarātmānāvīśate deva ekaḥ /  
tasyābhidhyānādyojanāttattvabhāvādbhūyaścānte viśvamāyānivṛttiḥ // 10 //

10. The difference between the Prakriti and the Jivatma is the fact that Prakriti and the world created by it are both perishable and gross, while the Jivatma is eternal and imperishable as well as sublime. [This is because the world is an artificial creation depending upon the creature’s individual likings and nature—refer verse no. 8,

whereas the Jivatma referred to here is not the gross body but the sublime Atma that is eternal and imperishable and the truthful conscious ‘self’ of the creature—refer verse no. 8-9.]

The supreme Atma or Brahm keeps these two entities under his strict control.

A wise and erudite aspirant who keeps his mind constantly focused on this supreme Brahm, who thinks of nothing else except this eternal Brahm, is able to ultimately attain the latter. All sorts of Maya (delusions) are done away with. [This is because all his energy and strength and time would be diverted towards achieving this one single goal. He would be so focused on his objective that he would neither have the time nor the inclinations to think about anything else, and thereby eliminating all chances of being ensnared by temptations and other negative factors that might cause delusions and distractions. He would stop perceiving this gross world as having an independent existence that is separate from Brahm, and instead would develop the holistic view that it is Brahm who manifested in the form of this world. If this world is Brahm, say how can there be delusions in it, as Brahm is free from all delusions. Why is it so? It is so because Brahm is ‘Truth’ personified, whereas Maya (delusion), on the contrary, is ‘falsehood’ personified.] (10).

ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः क्षीणैः क्लेशैर्जन्ममृत्युप्रहाणिः ।  
तस्याभिध्यानान्त्रितयं देहभेदे विश्वैश्वर्यं केवल आप्तकामः ॥११॥

jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ kṣīṇaiḥ  
kleśairjanmamṛtyuprahāṇiḥ /  
tasyābhidhyānāntṛitayaṃ dehabhede viśvaiśvaryaṃ  
kevala āptakāmaḥ // 11 //

11. When a wise and enlightened spiritual aspirant constantly, consistently and diligently meditates and contemplates upon the supreme Lord (Brahm), when he realises or experiences or witnesses first hand that eternal truthful source of illumination and knowledge, it is then that all his mental and spiritual torments, perplexities, confusions, dilemmas and consternations are eliminated, and when this happens, when the ‘truth’ and the ‘reality’ dawns upon his mental and intellectual horizon, the spiritual aspirant is freed from the fear of birth and death. [This happens because he comes to realise that the supreme Brahm is the cosmic Truth known as Consciousness which is the fundamental cause of everything in existence, and this Consciousness resides in his own bosom as the Atma, his truthful self. So, when he realises Brahm he is actually realising who he actually is. In other words, he has understood the true meaning of the great saying of the scriptures which assert ‘Tattwamasi’ (that essence and principle is you), ‘Ayamatma Brahm’ (my Atma is Brahm) etc.—refer Canto 7, verse no. 8. With this eclectic view of creation and the ‘self’ there is no cause of any fear because the Atma is eternal and imperishable, it is the ‘true self’ of the aspirant, it is separate from the body which is actually the entity that dies, and it is blissful and wise. Refer also to verse no. 1 of this present Canto 9.]

In this way when he has acquired a holistic knowledge of the ‘self’ and Brahm, he becomes self-satisfied and one whose the desires are fulfilled. With no desires left, he does not have to take a birth after shedding the mortal gross body upon his physical death. [This is because unfulfilled desires along with the remainder of the results of deeds done by a creature during his life-time that could not be enjoyed or

suffered by him while he was still alive act as the determining factor as to what kind of re-birth he would take, where he would be born and in which form, in the next life. With desires completely eliminated, with not getting involved in any deeds which automatically result in non-accumulation of any results, the wise and enlightened aspirant does not have to take a new birth again. So what happens to him? The undisputed answer is he finds ‘Kaivalya Mukti’—the ‘only kind’ of liberation and deliverance from the cycle of birth and death, the ‘unique’ form of freedom from this vicious cycle that is not otherwise available. And, what is the fate then? Well, the Upanishads unequivocally declare that such an enlightened, self and Brahm realised person finds ‘oneness’ with Brahm. That is, his own Atma or soul merges with the cosmic Atma or the eternal Soul known as Brahm. This is possible because both are the same ‘consciousness’ existing in two planes—one at the individual level of the person, and the other at the cosmic level of creation. It is like the case of ‘light emanating from the fire element’ having an omnipresent existence—it needs a spark to make its presence felt anywhere and at any moment. The same ‘fire’ and its ‘light’ resides latently in a candle as well as in the pit of the fire sacrifice or the household hearth.]

Such a person is so contented that he does not even desire to have anything to do with the comforts and pleasures of the heaven. [For, he has tasted the eternal and the best form of elixir of beatitude and felicity known as Brahm, and when a man has tasted the best of nectar, he would naturally have nothing to do with lesser drinks.] (11).

एतज्ज्ञेयं नित्यमेवात्मसंस्थं नातः परं वेदितव्यं हि किञ्चित् ।

भोक्ता भोग्यं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा सर्वं प्रोक्तं त्रिविधं ब्रह्म ह्येतत् ॥१२॥

etajjñeyam nityamevātmasamstham nātaḥ param  
veditavyam hi kiñcit /  
bhoktā bhogyam preritāram ca matvā sarvaṁ proktaṁ  
trividham brahma hyotat // 12 //

12. A wise, erudite, knowledgeable, learned and enlightened man is he who knows, who firmly believes, who is steady in his unfaltering conviction that the supreme Lord (Brahm) is honourably ensconced in his own bosom, in his own subtle heart as his Atma which is pure consciousness and his true self.

There is nothing better or superior to this Brahm or pure and truthful Consciousness that is worth paying any attention to, or imagining, even for a fleeting moment. [That is, the only thing worthwhile of paying any attention to, anything worthy of spending one’s time and energy on even for a fraction of a second is Brahm.]

By knowing the truth about the ‘Bhokta’ (i.e. creature or the living being who is the one who physically lives in this world of material sense objects and either enjoys or suffers it), the ‘Bhogyā’ (i.e. the things of the world that are enjoyed or suffered from), and ‘Prerak’ (i.e. the supreme Brahm one who inspires, who motivates, who drives the creature, the individual as well as the entire creation, to do anything at all), the wise spiritual aspirant comes to know or learn about everything worth knowing or learning in this world.

The real underlying principle that operates in all these three planes of existence—i.e. as the Bhokta, as the Bhogya and as the Prerak—is the same, and it is known as Brahm<sup>1</sup> (12).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>In order to understand what is meant here, let's take a very simple example from the material sciences. As is well known and established, the atom is the basic building block of everything. If there is anything in existence, if we have any material object, then it is certain there must be an atom at its fundamental core. Without the atom nothing can have any physical existence. Likewise, without the underlying truth known as Brahm nothing can come into existence in this creation. Again, as ordinary eyes cannot see the atom, ordinary persons cannot see Brahm. And again, as any scientist worth his salt knows for certain about the existence of an atom though he cannot see it in physical terms, every wise and enlightened spiritual seeker knows about the truthful existence of Brahm. To disbelievers this concept of Brahm being at the core of everything in this creation seems to be as incomprehensible and abstract and incredulous as the concept of the atom being the fundamental unit of everything in this world appears to ordinary men. Since he cannot see the atom he believes this to be a cock-and-bull story conjured up by modern science; this concept is too abstract for a man too preoccupied with his humdrum life and daily chores.

From the perspective of the Upanishads, it is the Brahm that actually enjoys anything in his manifestation as the Jiva or the living being. This is because the Atma living in the Jiva is Brahm manifested in a subtle form as the Pran or life-infusing consciousness present in the body of the living being.

It is the Brahm that is enjoyed in its form as the material world. This is because the gross world is also a manifestation of Brahm in its gross form known as the Vishwa.

And it is the same Brahm that provides the medium or the inspiration to the Jiva to enjoy this world. This is Brahm in its form as the subtle mind and the heart that inspires the living being to do anything in this world.

So we deduce that all the three aspects of creation—the seer, the seen and the process of seeing are nothing but Brahm operating in them.]

आत्मविद्यातपोमूलं तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परम् ।१३।

ātmaavidyātapomūlaṁ tadbrahmopaniṣatparam // 13 //

13. The only way to understand about this most enigmatic and esoteric entity known as Brahm, the way to realise or experience the undisputable presence or existence of this universal eclectic entity known as Brahm are 'Atma Vidya' or knowledge of the Atma or the pure conscious soul or the 'true self', and 'Tapa' or austerity, penance, sacrifices and deep concentration. It is this Brahm which is a universal and uniformly non-dual divine cosmic entity that is so much lauded and endorsed by the Upanishads. It is out of ignorance or out of delusions or out of misconceptions of judgement or out of misinterpretations of what the Upanishads say and mean that one thinks or concludes about Brahm being dual or having a triad of existence. [That is, it is out of wrong perception of the universal Truth about Brahm that one thinks that the invisible cosmic power known as Brahm and the visible world driven by this power are two distinct and separate entities. Similarly, it is out of ignorance that one thinks of the three aspects of Brahm as being a Bhokta, a Bhogya and a Prerak as described in verse no. 12. In short, all conceptions and notions and ideas about Brahm other than the latter being an irrefutably non-dual, indivisible, immutable, unchangeable, eternal



and imperishable entity is fallacious, erroneous and false. In fact, it is the same Divinity that has all these forms having different contours and shapes.] (13).

य एवं विदित्वा स्वरूपमेवानुचिन्तयंस्तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः । तस्माद्विराड्भूतं भव्यं  
भविष्यद्भवत्यनश्चरस्वरूपम् ॥१४॥

ya evaṃ viditvā svarūpamevānucintayaṃstatra ko mohah  
kaḥ śoka ekatvamanupaśyataḥ /  
tasmāvirāḍbhūtaṃ bhavyaṃ  
bhaviṣyadbhavatyanaśvarasvarūpam // 14 //

14. Where is there any scope for sorrows and grief as well as confusions, perplexities, delusions and consternations of any kind for a wise and self-realised man who has come to understand the truthful nature of his own 'self' as being a personification of the supreme Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness that resides in his bosom as his Atma?

He sees the same Brahm everywhere, in all forms, and at all times. The entire world, with its colossus dimensions and endless permutation and combination of forms and attributes, whether it is the world of the past, of the present or the future, are all a revelation of the same eternal Brahm (14).

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम् ।  
तमक्रतुं पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमीशम् ॥१५॥

aṇoraṇīyānmahato mahīyānātmāsyā jantornihito guhāyām /  
tamakratuṃ paśyati vītaśoko dhātuḥ prasādānmahimānamīśam // 15 //

15. This Brahm is a most enigmatic, esoteric and mysterious entity. It is smaller than the smallest, and bigger or more majestic than the biggest or the most majestic in this creation. This unique and un-definable Brahm lives in the inner chamber of the subtle heart of every creature (as his Atma).

By the grace and benevolence of this great Lord who is the creator and protector of the entire creation, when an aspirant develops the inner sight of wisdom and enlightenment that enables him to have a divine vision of the supreme Lord and realise his stupendous glories and magnificence, he is freed from all agonies, miseries, sorrows and torments that swirl around ordinary creatures in this world (15).

अपाणिपादो जवनो ग्रहीता पश्यत्यचक्षुः स शृणोत्यकर्णः ।  
स वेत्ति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता तमाहुरग्र्यं पुरुषं महान्तम् ॥१६॥

apāṇipādo javano grahītā paśyatyacakṣuḥ  
sa śruṇotyakaraṇah /  
sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyāsti vettā tamāhuragryaṃ  
puruṣaṃ mahāntam // 16 //

16. That supreme Lord (Brahm) is able to acquire everything though he has no physical hands; he can go anywhere he wishes inspite of having no physical legs; he can see everything without having any physical eyes; and he can hear everything though he has no physical ears.

If fact, he knows about everything worth knowing as he is omniscient and all-knowing. But the mystery is that no one knows anything about this Lord (Brahm), as he is most enigmatic, esoteric and mysterious in the entire creation.

Those who are wise, learned and erudite recognise him as being the most ancient, primal and majestic cosmic Purush (the primordial Male that is a metaphor for the Father) of creation. [He is called a 'male' because Brahm is the Lord who provided the initial spark of life. He was the one who initiated the process of creation by 'wishing' it to get started and symbolically providing the 'sperm' representing this wish in the form of the initial energy and the basic wherewithal that sparked off the process of creation. What were the energy and the wherewithal? The 'Tej' represented the driving force and the dynamic energy of creation, and the 'Panch Bhuts' (i.e. the five elements—earth, water, fire, air and sky) and other 'Tattvas' (such as Ahankar or ego, Gunas such as Sata Guna, Raja Guna and Tama Guna etc.) were the wherewithal needed to start the process of creation.] (16).

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।  
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥१७॥

aśārīraṃ śarīreṣvanavastheśvavasthitam /  
mahāntaṃ vibhumātmānaṃ matvā dhīro na śocati // 17 //

17. When a man patiently, after due diligence and deep analysis, and with firmness of conviction based on intelligent interpretation of the teaching of the scriptures and his own experience comes to be acquainted with this all-pervading and omnipresent supreme Lord (Brahm) who lives uniformly and universally in the perishable and mortal gross bodies of all the creatures (as their Atma) inspite of being imperishable and eternal himself, he never gets affected by any kind of worldly miseries, grief and sorrows (17).

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यशक्तिं सर्वागमान्तार्थविशेषवेद्यम् ।  
परात्परं परमं वेदितव्यं सर्वावसानेऽन्तकृद्वेदितव्यम् ॥१८॥

sarvasya dhātāramacintyaśaktiṃ sarvāgamāntārtthaviśeṣavedyam /  
parātparaṃ paramaṃ veditavyaṃ sarvāvasāne'ntakṛdveditavyam // 18 //

18. This cosmic supreme Lord (Brahm) is the sustainer and protector of all living beings in this creation. The astoundingly powerful dynamic energy called the 'Shakti' of this Lord is most mysterious and un-describable. It is this dynamism of Brahm that has brought into existence the entire creation, and it is the one principal factor that is lauded by the scriptures as a special virtue and attribute of the supreme Brahm that is worth honouring and understanding. The dynamic cosmic authority, power and energy of the supreme transcendental Brahm that is known as the Lord's 'Shakti' is to be regarded as being synonymous with Brahm. [It is like the case of a king's authority

and powers that are regarded as being equivalent to the king himself. If the king has no authority and powers then what is the use of his being a king? How would he carry out his functions as a ruler of his kingdom if he has no authority and power? A king sans his authority and power is like an ordinary man. In fact, it is the authority and power that is vested in the king which makes an otherwise ordinary man into a king. The 'king' and his 'royal powers' are inseparable from one another. If there is a king then his royal powers accompany him, otherwise he is not a 'king' at all.]

So, the same Lord or his Shakti is the creator of the entire creation on the one hand, and the concluder of it on the other hand (18).

कविं पुराणं पुरुषोत्तमोत्तमं सर्वेश्वरं सर्वदेवैरुपास्यम् ।  
अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तमव्ययं शिवाच्युताम्भोरुहगर्भभूधरम् ॥१९॥

kaviṃ purāṇaṃ puruṣottamottamaṃ sarveśvaraṃ sarvadevairupāsyam /  
anādimadhyāntamanantamavyayaṃ  
śivācyutāmbhoruhagarbhabhūdharam // 19 //

19. That all-knowing, most erudite, wisest and enlightened Supreme Being is ancient and primary Purush or the primordial Male in creation.

He is the best, the most exalted and the highest Authority in creation.

He is the Lord of all lords.

It is he who has revealed himself in the form of all the known Gods, and is the one supreme Lord who is honoured and shown the greatest respect by the Gods.

He has no beginning, no middle and no end. He is imperishable, eternal, infinite, constant and steady.

He is that great mountain that gives rise (birth) to the great Gods of the holy Trinity—i.e. Brahm is the one from whom Vishnu the sustainer, nourisher and protector of creation, Shiva the concluder, and Brahma the creator born atop a divine lotus have emerged (19).

स्वेनावृतं सर्वमिदं प्रपञ्चं पञ्चात्मकं पञ्चसु वर्तमानम् ।  
पञ्चीकृतानन्तभवप्रपञ्चं पञ्चीकृतस्वावयवैरसंवृतम् ।  
परात्परं यन्महतो महान्तं स्वरूपतेजोमयशाश्वतं शिवम् ॥२०॥

svenāvṛtaṃ sarvamiḍaṃ prapañcaṃ pañcātmakaṃ pañcasu vartamānam /  
pañcīkṛtānantabhavaprapañcaṃ pañcīkṛtasvāyavairasaṃvṛtaṃ /  
parātparaṃ yanmahato mahāntaṃ svarūpatejomayaśāśvataṃ śivam // 20 //

20. It is this supreme transcendental Brahm, the Lord of creation, who embodies all the five 'Bhuts' of creation (i.e. the five primary elements called the Bhuts, such as the earth, water, fire, air or wind, and sky or space, are deemed to be present in the cosmic body of Brahm, and it is from the latter that these Bhuts emerged at the time of creation).

It is Brahm who is inherently established in all five 'Indris' or sense organs of perception and action present in the body of all the living beings. [The five organs of perception are eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. The five organs of action are hands,

legs, mouth, excretory and genitals. Brahm lives in them as the consciousness and life-factors that pervades these organs. If consciousness or life leaves these organs, they would fall numb, become lifeless, lose all sensation, and die.]

It is this Brahm who has traditionally established this endless chain of birth and death.

The entire world of astounding diversity and maverism is actually moulded from the five elementary Bhuts or elements (earth, water, fire, air/wind and sky/space) that have been created by Brahm himself, and which symbolically represent Brahm in varying degrees of grossness or subtlety. Since Brahm has used them as the fundamental building bricks to construct the vast edifice of this creation, it follows that the finished structure known as 'creation' has these five elements or Bhuts at its core and as an integral part which is inseparable from the finished product<sup>1</sup>. Again, since these Bhuts represent Brahm in different degrees of grossness or subtlety, it follows that Brahm is secretly, but invariably and inherently present in the entire creation as its integral and inseparable part, displaying different characteristics, qualities, virtues and attributes depending upon the ratio of the various Gunas (such as Sata, Raja and Tama Gunas) and other such factors that make each individual so unique that they cannot be generalised, but at the same time they are all united together into a garland known as the 'creation' by a single underlying principle known as Brahm which acts like the thread or string that holds the beads or the flowers of the garland together and give these individual units a definitive shape and name.

In spite of this, Brahm is free from being definable in terms of the characteristics and attributes depicted by these Bhuts. [That is, though the Panch Bhuts or the five elements are incorporated in the body of Brahm in the same way as they are incorporated in the body of this creation, Brahm is not dependent upon any of them, while the creation is. Each of the Bhuts depicts some of the virtues or characteristics of Brahm, but not the Brahm in its entirety. Similarly, the reverse is also true. Brahm has the unique virtues of any one given Bhut, but Brahm cannot be defined in terms of the virtues of this single Bhut alone. In fact, Brahm represents all the Bhuts combined. This is the 'Samasthi' (all-inclusive, comprehensive) view of Brahm, while the individual Bhut is the 'Vyasthi' (isolated, individualistic) view of Brahm. So, when these Bhuts are used by Brahm as the fundamental building blocks or bricks of creation, they carry these unique virtues of Brahm to the creation just like the case of the ingredients in any chemical product lending the finished product their individual chemical properties. So the resultant structure known as the creation bears the finger-prints of Brahm in the form of these elements.]

This Brahm is out of reach and transcendental; he is supreme and most exalted. He is self-illuminated, self-present, self-evident, eternal and truthful (20).

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः । नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनामाप्नुयात् ॥२१॥

nāvirato duścaritānnāśānto nāsamāhitaḥ /  
nāśāntamanaso vāpi prajñānenainamāpnuyāt // 21 //

21. A person who has not overcome the tendency to commit sins, wickedness, mischief and unprincipled misconduct, whose sense organs are not under his control and are reckless and wayward, whose sub-conscious mind is not stable and focused on

the eclectic goal of life, whose mind and heart are fickle, restless, and not fully contented and calmed down—it is not possible for him to realise the supreme Brahm and acquire the divine knowledge that can enable him to get acquainted with the true nature and sublime form of the Lord. [This is because knowledge that can entitle one to be acquainted with an entity as sublime and divine, as esoteric and enigmatic, as mysterious and mystical as Brahm needs an exceptionally sharp intellect as well as a proper ground and framework to be effective. Just like one cannot expect rice to be grown on desert land or colourful flowers to grow on a cactus plant, no one can hope to know Brahm if the right mental, intellectual and spiritual environment is not there, if the environment is not conducive to realisation of Brahm.] (21).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The terms grossness and subtlety are only relevant in nature—for instance, earth is the grossest of the five elements and sky is the subtlest. When we start counting from below, we ascend from grossest element earth to move up the ladder of decreasing grossness and increasing subtlety to the water element, the fire element, the air or wind element, to finally reach the top rung of the sky or space element which is the subtlest of the lot. All these elements have combined together, in varying proportions, to give rise to an astounding variety of creation. In this, they are aided by other secondary elements, also called the Tattvas, such as the three Gunas—the Sata, the Raja and the Tama.

The entire world that exists is made from these five basic elements called the ‘Panch Bhuts’ which act as the fundamental building blocks or bricks for this creation. Since these elements are Brahm’s representatives in varying degrees of grossness or subtlety, it follows that Brahm permeates throughout this creation as its basic foundation and building block. As no structure of a building can be imagined without the brick, and since the brick is at the heart of all physical structures known as buildings, it follows that Brahm is also at the heart of the edifice of the world at its fundamental called the Bhuts.]

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं न स्थूलं नास्थूलं न ज्ञानं नाज्ञानं नोभयतः प्रज्ञमग्राह्यमव्यवहार्यं स्वान्तःस्थितः  
स्वयमेवेति य एवं वेद स मुक्तो भवति स मुक्तो भवतीत्याह भगवान्पितामहः ॥२२॥

nāntaḥprajñam na bahiḥprajñam na sthūlam nāsthūlam na jñānam  
nājñānam nobhayataḥ prajñamagrāhyamavyavahāryam svāntaḥ sthitaḥ  
svayameveti ya evaṁ veda sa mukto bhavati sa mukto bhavatītyāha  
bhagavānpitāmahaḥ // 22 //

22. That absolutely complete Brahm, the Supreme Being, is such an enigmatic, esoteric and mysterious entity that it presents the greatest paradoxes of creation. Brahm cannot be fully known and comprehended either internally (by turning inwards and doing contemplation or meditation) or externally (by the sense organs of perception that attempt to visualise Brahm in the external features of the world).

Similarly, Brahm is neither gross nor subtle, neither erudite and enlightened nor ignorant and stupid. He is beyond the grasp and reach (comprehension and understanding) of all the creatures, no matter how intelligent, wise and learned they are, and is also not the subject matter of the behavioural world of material sense objects.

He lives inside his own self. [Whereas the Atma, which is pure consciousness, lives inside the gross body of a creature as the latter’s true ‘self’, in the case of the supreme transcendental Brahm there is no such thing as a gross body harbouring an Atma inside it. This is simply because Brahm is an embodiment of ‘Consciousness’, a

synonym for 'Consciousness', or 'Consciousness' personified. There is no entity known as Brahm that is distinct or separate from 'Consciousness', or is 'not Consciousness' itself. Therefore, Consciousness harbouring Consciousness makes no sense. How can, for instance, fire harbour another fire inside it? Firewood can harbour fire latently inside it, but the pure element known as 'fire' is uniformly the same 'fire' no matter where we examine it. Hence, Brahm is 'Consciousness' from within and without. Brahm is wholesome 'Consciousness'.]

A wise, learned and enlightened man who comes to realise the Supreme Being as outlined above is able to obtain Mukti (liberation and deliverance). Indeed, he attains Mukti. This is what Brahma preached sage Narad (22).

स्वरूपपज्ञः परिव्राट् परिव्राडेकाकी चरति भयत्रस्तसारङ्गवत्तिष्ठति । गमनविरोधं न करोति ।  
स्वशरीरव्यतिरिक्तं सर्वं त्यक्त्वा षट् पदवृत्त्या स्थित्वा स्वरूपानुसन्धानं कुर्वन्सर्वमनन्यबुद्ध्या स्वस्मिन्नेव  
मुक्तो भवति । स परिव्राट् सर्वक्रियाकारकनिवर्तकोगुरुशिष्यशास्त्रादिविनिर्मुक्तः सर्वसंसारं विसृज्य  
चामोहितः परिव्राट् कथं निर्धनिकः सुखी धनवाञ्छानाज्ञानोभयातीतः सुखदुःखातीतः स्वयंज्योतिः  
प्रकाशः सर्ववेद्यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वसिद्धिदः सर्वेश्वरः सोऽहमिति । तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं यत्र गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते  
योगिनः । सूर्यो न तत्र भाति न शशाङ्कोऽपि न स पुनरावर्तते न स पुनरावर्तते तत्कैवल्यमित्युपनिषत्  
॥२३॥

॥ इति नारदपरिव्राजकोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

svasvarūpajñāḥ parivrāṭ parivrāḍekākī carati bhayatrastasāraṅgavattiṣṭhati /  
gamanavirodhaṁ na karoti /  
svaśārīravyatiriktaṁ sarvaṁ tyaktvā ṣṭpadavṛtṭyā sthitvā  
svarūpānusandhānaṁ kurvansarvamananyabuddhyā  
svasminneva mukto bhavati /  
sa parivrāṭ sarvakriyākāraṇanivartako guruśiṣyaśāstrādivinirmuktaḥ  
sarvasaṁsāraṁ visṛjya cāmohitaḥ parivrāṭ kathaṁ nirdhanikaḥ sukḥī  
dhanavāññāññānānobhayātītaḥ sukhaduḥkhātītaḥ svayaṁjyotiḥ prakāśaḥ  
sarvavedyaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvasiddhidaḥ sarveśvaraḥ so'hamiti /  
tadviṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ yatra gatvā na nivartante yoginaḥ /  
sūryo na tatra bhāti na śaśāṅko'pi na sa punarāvartate na sa punarāvartate  
tatkaivalyamityupaniṣat // 23 //

23. A self-realised Parivrajak (Sanyasi) who comes to know about his true self and its eclectic and divine nature roams freely alone. Such an ascetic never hides or remains concealed in a secure place out of any kind of fears like a terrified deer.

He never accepts any conditions being imposed upon his freedom and movement. If anyone objects to his wanderings or tells him to go in a specified direction, a Parivrajak does not pay any heed to it.

Excluding his gross body, he abandons all other possessions and survives on food obtained by begging. [He keeps the body because it is the vehicle used by his Atma, his 'true self' during his journey in this life. He has to beg for food because this body cannot survive without it. He keeps the body only till the time his Atma has to live in this world to complete the remainder of its destined time to live in the gross body, and once the pre-determined time is over, he finds final Moksha (emancipation

and salvation) for himself by abandoning this last possession that he has. That is, when all his 'Praarabdha' (destiny determined by his past deeds and desires) is exhausted, when he has done away with all spiritual encumbrances and bondages that might act as drags when he (i.e. his Atma) finally leaves his gross body to fly off to its freedom, the Parivrajak gladly, willingly and without any regrets abandons or sheds this gross body as last possession that he has. When this comes to pass, the Parivrajak is said to be truly freed from all fetters and bondages.]

He remains submerged in the thoughts of his own pure 'self' (i.e. his pure consciousness known as the Atma which is self-illuminated, enlightened and blissful). As a result, he develops a profound sense of equanimity and uniformity vis-à-vis the rest of the creature and the world at large. This is because being self-realised he becomes wise and enlightened enough to understand that the Atma that resides in his own bosom is the same entity that resides in the bosom of all other creatures in this world, and that anything worth paying attention to in this otherwise false and deluding world of material sense objects is this Atma which is the only 'truth and reality' that is hidden inside it, and that it is the magnificent Atma that gives this world its charm, meaning and importance. This eclectic view of the existential world frees him from all effects of delusions and ignorance. In other words, he becomes a free man who is not bound to any fetters of delusions and ignorance.

Such a wise Parivrajak develops a uniformity of view and is firmly established in the doctrine of non-duality. He therefore eliminates distinctions between one entity being a doer and the other being a motivator or an inspirer. [That is, there is no distinction between the creature, the doer, and his Atma, the motivator. Similarly, there is no distinction between the individual creature, the doer, and Brahm, the universal motivator.]

He also does not do deeds with some motivation and cause. [That is, he does not do deeds with an eye on some result to be obtained by doing them. Instead, he does them as and when they come along, without bothering himself about the good or bad results of these deeds. He does the deeds as being the wish of the Lord who wants him to do them, and does not do them with some personal vested interests.]

He also frees himself from all formalities and obligations associated with the tripod of knowledge that consists of (i) the Guru (the teacher; the moral preceptor and teacher who brings the knowledge within the reach of the disciple), (ii) the disciple (the taught; or the person who seeks knowledge of the scriptures by approaching the teacher), and (iii) the scripture (the body of knowledge that is taught by the teacher and learnt by the disciple).

[A Sanyasi or a Parivrajak has no Guru to obey and give respect to because, once realised, he is his own Guru. He need not study and spend time with the scriptures because he has found the truth that these scriptures strive to reveal by their teachings. So, he need not follow any formalities and is under no obligation of anyone.]

Having abandoned this world, he is no more bothered by its miseries and agonies. The world can no more cause any kind of restlessness or agitations to him.

What should be his behaviour and outlook? This question is elaborated further as follows. In spite of having no physical assets or wealth, he is always and eternally happy and contented. Being endowed with the spiritual wealth of Brahm-realisation and self-realisation, he rises above all mundane considerations of this gross material world of sense objects, and becomes immune to being either knowledgeable or being ignorant. He transcends both the concepts of happiness and joys as well as of agonies,

sorrows, miseries and pains. [That is, he becomes absolutely neutral and dispassionate.]

He obtains light and illumination from his own self-illuminated Atma. All that is worth knowing becomes known to him. [Here the term 'light' and 'illumination' refer to wisdom, erudition, knowledge and enlightenment. He does not need a Guru or a scripture to guide him in his spiritual path, as the realisation of the Atma proves to be the light that illuminates his spiritual path for him. Nothing remains unknown for him; nothing is too secret for him.]

He becomes so exalted and highly empowered that he acquires knowledge of everything and becomes accomplished in every respect. He acquires all Siddhis (mystical powers) and becomes an authority on them so much so that he can bless others with these spiritual powers. In this respect, he becomes equivalent to the great Lord himself, or becomes 'Brahm-like'. This is because he has truly realised who he actually is when he unequivocally affirms and honestly declares 'So-a-ham'—i.e. 'that is me'. Here, the term 'that' refers to the supreme Brahm. [So-a-ham is one of the great sayings of the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is taken for granted here that when the Parivrajak declares 'I am Brahm' he is not lying and being honest in what he says.]

The Parivrajak goes to the eternal, truthful and divine abode of Lord Vishnu. He does not have to come back and take a new birth again. [That is, he finds final liberation and deliverance from the cycle of birth and death.]

There is no sun or moon to illuminate this divine abode of Lord Vishnu. [This statement is meant to indicate that the heaven where the spiritual aspirant goes after death is not some physical world where some sun would rise during the day or the moon during the night. It is an eternally illuminated destiny. This is because this destiny of the soul is Brahm which is eternally self-illuminated cosmic Consciousness. It ought to be noted here that one need not get confused by the mention of the name of Lord Vishnu here in the context of Brahm because Vishnu is regarded as being the Viraat Purush or the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm, and is treated as the Supreme Being in the Purans and other scriptures. It is from Vishnu that Brahma and Shiva were born.]

The great Parivrajak or Sanyasi or a spiritual aspirant who obtains this exalted destiny that is eternal and imperishable becomes one like it, and therefore he does not have to come back to assume another body in this mortal world. Since that divine abode is the only truthful destiny for the Atma or soul, its accomplishment is called 'Kaivalya'—or the destiny that is unique and one of its kind.

Verily and in all sooth, this is what this Upanishad teaches; this is the unequivocal preaching of this great Upanishad. Amen! (23).

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## (5.2) Paramhans Parivrajak Upanishad:

This Upanishad describes the special eclectic and divine qualities and unique characteristics of a Parivrajak (i.e. a Sanyasi; a renunciate ascetic, monk, mendicant or friar who had completely renounced the world) who has reached higher state of



spiritual realisation when he becomes self and Brahm realised, is internally very pious, pure and holy, and hence honoured by the epithet of being a 'Param Hans'. This title draws its name from the legendary Swan which is regarded as pure, holy, discriminatory and the wisest amongst birds because it has the mystical ability to pick up water and leave behind water, or pick up pearls from an assortment of gems. The Swan lives in clean water and none of the impurities of the water ever affects it.

The Upanishad outlines the necessary qualities that entitle a spiritual aspirant to be called a 'Parivrajak' (a Sanyasi), and then elevated to the stature of being called a 'Param Hans Parivrajak' which is a rare honour, the method of attaining this exalted state of existence, his way of life, what his state of mind is, how he thinks and behaves, what is the significance and symbolism of his renouncing everything in this world, including the important signs of religion such as the sacred thread, the tuft of hair on the head etc., and other such relevant topics.

It also describes how the Sanyasi reaches the climax of his spiritual pursuit by obtaining Mukti or Moksha which is liberation and deliverance from delusions and ignorance that leads to emancipation and salvation of the soul by realizing who or what the supreme transcendental Brahm essentially is, and how his own 'self' is this Brahm personified.

The text is in the form of an interrupted long prose. Therefore, for the purpose of this narrative it has been divided into seven paragraphs based on one major central idea that is covered in a particular paragraph.

It is a revealed Upanishad as it was preached by the primeval Lord known as Adi-Narayan (i.e. the primary form of Lord Vishnu which is also known as the Viraat Purush) when he was approached by Brahma, the creator of this world, to learn about the concept of a Param-Hans Sanyasi.

There are a number of Upanishads that deal with the concept of Parivrajak or Sanyas and various related topics. Some that are obviously very relevant to this present Upanishad of ours are the following—Param Brahm Upanishad, Brahm Upanishad, Narad Parivrajak Upanishad, Sanyas Upanishad, Yagyawalkya Upanishad, Bhikshuk Upanishad, and Hans Upanishad.

## । परमहंसपरिव्राजकोपनिषद् ॥

अथ पितामहः स्वपितरमादिनारायणमुपसमेत्य प्रणम्य पप्रच्छ । भगवंस्त्वन्मुखाद्वर्णाश्रमधर्मक्रमं सर्वं श्रुतं विदितमवगतम् । इदानीं परमहंसपरिव्राजकलक्षणं वेदितुमिच्छामि कः परिव्रजनाधिकारी, कीदृशं परिव्राजकलक्षणं, कः परमहंसः, परिव्राजकत्वं कथं, तत्सर्वं मे ब्रूहीति । स होवाच भगवानादिनारायणः ॥१॥

atha pitāmahah svapitaramādinārāyaṇamupasametya  
praṇamya papraccha /  
bhagavaṁstvanmukhādvārṇāśramadharmakramam  
sarvaṁ śrutaṁ viditamavagatam /  
idānīm paramahaṁsaparivrājakalakṣaṇam veditumicchāmi  
kaḥ parivrajanādhikārī kīdr̥śaṁ parivrājakalakṣaṇam  
kaḥ paramahaṁsaḥ parivrājakatvaṁ katham tatsarvaṁ me brūhīti /

sa hovāca bhagavānādinārāyaṇaḥ // 1 //

1. Once upon a time, Brahma (the creator of this world) went to his father, the Lord known as Adi Narayan<sup>1</sup>, bowed reverentially before him, and asked, ‘Oh Lord! I have come to learn about the four Varnas (classes in Hindu society<sup>2</sup>) and the laws governing them by hearing about them from you.

Now I wish to learn about the qualities and characteristic features of those exalted people who are called ‘Param Hans Parivrajak’<sup>3</sup> (literally meaning a class of enlightened and realised ascetics, monks, mendicants or hermits who have totally renounced this world and its delusions, and have reached an exalted state of spiritual awareness which makes them both ‘self’ as well as ‘Brahm’ realised). Who is eligible to become a Parivrajak (or a renunciate person who has renounced all his attachments with the material world of sense objects and has therefore become completely detached from it and dispassionate towards it; such persons are called a ‘Sanyasi’)? What are the special characteristics and virtues of a Parivrajak (Sanyasi)?

Out of them, who is called a ‘Param Hans’ (literally meaning someone who has risen above the ordinary class of being a Sanyasi, and has reached the pinnacle of spiritualism when he becomes so holy and pure that he is compared to the divine Swan<sup>4</sup> and given the honourable title of a ‘Param Hans’), and why is he called so?

How does one achieve the stature of being called a true Parivrajak; what is the way or the method to reach this most exalted state of existence for a spiritual aspirant (who wishes to obtain liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation for himself)?

Please be kind and gracious to tell me all about it.’

Hearing this earnest plea of Brahma, Lord Adi Narayan began to preach as follows—(1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Lord *Adi-Narayan* refers literally to Lord Narayan who is the most ancient and the primary as well as the primordial Lord of creation. Here the term refers to the Viraat Purush, the Supreme Being in the form of Lord Vishnu from whom Brahma, the creator, was born atop a divine lotus that emerged from Vishnu’s navel as he reclined on the bed of the coiled body of Sheshnath, the legendary serpent who floated on the surface of the Kshirsagar, the cosmic ocean of milk.

<sup>2</sup>*Varnas* = References—(i) Atharva Veda’s = Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 5, verse no. 8; Narad Parivrajak Upanishad, Canto 1, stanza no. 2, Canto 2, stanza no. 1, Canto 5, verse no. 1; Ashram Upanishad. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda’s = Kathrudra Upanishad, verse no. 3. Reasons for classification—The Niralambo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 10 states the reason for the classification of the society in four classes.

The Subalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse 6, and Canto 2, verse 1 describes the origin of these four classes in society.

The Hindu society has been divided into four sections or classes by ancient sages to regulate its functioning by delegation of authority and clearly specifying the jobs each section is supposed to do to maintain order and system in the world, to prevent overlapping of functions and avoid anarchy and chaos. These four sections are— (a) Brahmins\*—the learned and teaching class; a wise one well-versed in the knowledge of the ultimate Truth about the supernatural Being called Brahm. They also presided over religious functions as priests, because these functions were central to life in the Vedic period; (b) Kshatriyas—they were the warrior, fighting, kingly class. They were assigned the job of giving protection to the society, dispensing justice and maintaining general law and order. (c) Vaishyas—they were the trading and farming class responsible for commerce and wealth generation. They provided for the necessities for a comfortable life. And finally (d) the Shudras—the service class of

people whose main function was to free the other three classes from the humdrums of daily chores and concentrate their energies to the particular jobs assigned to those classes to which they belonged.

Yajur Veda 31<sup>st</sup> Chapter, 11<sup>th</sup> Mantra says that Brahmins are the mouth of society, the Kshatriyas are its arms, Vaishyas are its stomach or abdomen, and Shudras are its legs. The body is regarded as a symbol of the society. As is obvious in this analogy, all these four units of the body must function properly and in close cooperation with each other in order that the body can survive and live comfortably and carry on with its assigned duties in an orderly fashion. The mouth is important because it is the medium by which the body takes food and speaks; the arms procure food and gives protection to the body against enemies; the stomach digests food and supplies the whole body with the energy needed by it; the abdomen holds all the internal organs; and the legs carry the body wherever it wants to go such as the place where food is available. Since food is the basis necessity of life, this instance is cited here. And the logic can be extended to everything else. Each component of the society must work properly in order that the whole society survives; each component is as vital as the other; each has its own importance in the bigger picture.

\*The salient features of Brahmins are the following—they should possess these noble qualities—(1) ‘Riju’-be expert in the Rig and the Yajur Vedas, (2) ‘Tapa’-should be involved in doing penances, observing austerities and enduring sufferings for the welfare of the soul and the society, (3) ‘Santosh’-be contented and satisfied, (4) ‘Kshamaa’-to be forgiving and tolerant, (5) ‘Sheel’-to have such virtues as good character, dignity, decorum and virtuousness, (6) ‘Jitendriya’-to have self control over the sense organs, (7) ‘Data’-to be a giver, one who sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of others, (8) ‘Gyani’-one who is well learned, wise, enlightened and erudite, (9) ‘Dayaalu’-to be merciful and compassionate. [Shatpath Brahman.] An entire Upanishad called Vajra-shuchiko-panishad, belonging to the Sam Veda tradition is devoted to the subject. The eclectic virtues of Brahmins have been expounded in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahman 5 as well as in Canto 3, Brahman 8, verse no. 10

These four classes of the human race were created from the single father, the Viraat or Brahma. Their origins are indicative of the different jobs that they were assigned so as to enable the creator perform the task of governance just like a king assigns separate jobs to his different ministers. But it must be clearly understood here that each class of the human race was like a part of the body of the Supreme Being, and even as a man feels disfigured and handicapped as well as feels the pain equally if his leg is cut off from the rest of his body as he feels when his arm or head is severed, the Lord feels betrayed and hurt when even one of his sons is subjected to humiliation and pain. The four classes had specific jobs cut for them so that the society could function smoothly.

The Brahmins have their origin from the mouth of Brahma the creator. Since the mouth is used to give advice and teach others, the primary job of the Brahmins was to act as moral guide to their brethren. The four Vedas, which are repository of all knowledge that exist, were also created from the mouth of Brahma; hence these Brahmins were considered most wise and learned. The arms are metaphors for strength and powers; they are used to protect and help others. Hence, the Kshatriyas, who were created from the arms of Brahma, were those sons of his who would give the needed protection and security to their other brethren. In order to feed his creation, Brahma had to toil and labour to provide for the maintenance and financial and material well being of the society for merely teaching and protecting would not suffice without some one to take care of the other necessities of life. So he created the Vaishyas from his thighs, symbolising labour, to pick up the mantle of mundane affairs of life. But there must be someone who would do the daily chores, such as tilling the fields, doing the harvesting, washing and cleaning, and all other such odd

jobs. This was assigned to the Shudras created from Brahma's feet symbolising service.

Paingalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse no. 7 and Canto 2, verse nos. 3 describe how the three basic Gunas of Sata, Raja and Tama were used by the supreme Brahm to create different types of creatures in this creation.

None of these classes were meant to be inferior or superior to one another; they were all parts of the body of the same Brahma. In fact, the leg bears the burden of the body; just imagine what would have happened if Brahma had not created anyone from his legs? How would the Brahmin walk, how would the Kshatriya fight, and how would the Vaishya do his commercial activities if he could not walk? Similar arguments can be applied to other classes. See also Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 1/4/11-15 which describes their origin in graphic details, and also Aetereyo-panishad, 1/1/4.

Reasons for classification—The Niralambo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 10 states the reason for the classification of the society in four classes.

The Subalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 1, verse 6, and Canto 2, verse 1 describes the origin of these four classes in society.

<sup>3</sup>*Param Hans Parivrajak* = The phrase has three words, viz. 'Param' meaning supreme, the most exalted, the most acclaimed, the highly realised and one who has reached the highest echelons of achievement in his given field of interest; 'Hans' means a Swan, and its significance and symbolism is explained herein below; and 'Parivrajak' meaning a Sanyasi or a renunciate person who has developed total dispassion towards this material world and realised the futility of either pursuing it or enjoying it because it is illusionary, deluding, entrapping, and the cause of all his miseries and torments.

In other words, a Param Hans Parivrajak is a Sanyasi or a monk, a hermit, a friar, a mendicant or an ascetic who has completely disassociated himself from any involvement with this artificial world of materialism, and has instead focused his mind and intellect on the Truth which would provide him eternal peace and beatitude. He has reached the pinnacle of self-realisation which makes him aware of the truth of the supreme transcendental divinity known as Brahm, and he is called a 'Hans' because he has washed off all his worldly impurities and cleansed his inner-self just like a Swan that floats in the water of a lake without the impurities of the water affecting its cleanliness even slightly. Such a man lives in this world but is aloof from it; he lives amongst all the delusions but is not at all affected by them. Besides it, he has developed the wisdom and the erudition to discriminate between what is good and what is not, what is true and what is false, what is liberating and what is ensnaring just like the Swan which has the legendary ability to pick up pearls from an assortment of gems, and drink milk leaving behind water and other adulterants in it.

<sup>4</sup>*Swan* = The enlightened and realised person thinks of himself as a Swan and feels exhilarated that he is not an ordinary man bogged down by worldly fetters, but an exalted soul that is like a Swan.

The bird *Swan* or Hans is considered the most pure, clean, wise, erudite and clever among the birds. It is said to eat pearls, which means it picks up and accepts only the best amid the variety of things available to it in the form of an assortment of various gems and jewels representing the dazzling charms of this world. It is also reputed to drink milk leaving aside the water content in it symbolising its ability to imbibe the essence and the best, and leave the rest aside. It is also the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati, the patron Goddess of knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, speech and learning, indicating that it bears these glorious virtues. Hence, the reference to a swan while describing a creature conscious of the vital wind or Pran passing through him means the basic, inherent and intrinsic tendency of that wisened and intelligent creature is to be the best, most pure and divine, wise, awakened and enlightened, adroit, clever and sagacious like the swan, and pick all the goodness and forsake all that is bad in this world. Saraswati rides on a swan, symbolising the creature's inborn

enlightenment and excellence of his mental caliber. Symbolically, Saraswati resides in his Pran because it rides on the swan, i.e. in his heart, throat and mind—that is, his heart has purity of emotions, he speaks well of all, and his wise words are sought after by all as priceless gems of wisdom, and his mind is intelligent, discerning and noble.

A wise man is expected to pick up the truth and leave aside the non-truths from the basket full of worldly charms of astounding proportions and myriad forms of temptations present in this creation.

Those wise men who have developed the level of wisdom, erudition and sagacity that they can discriminate between what is good and what is not, what is true and what is false, what is liberating and what is ensnaring for their soul are also honoured by the epithet of being a 'Hans' (Swan) because they are just like the Swan which has the legendary ability to pick up pearls from an assortment of gems, and drink milk leaving behind water and other adulterants in it. Even amongst such wise and enlightened men, those who have realised the 'truth' about their own self in the real sense, i.e. have become 'self-realised' and hence 'Brahm-realised' truthfully, and have consequentially attained the highest level of enlightenment and wisdom are called 'Param Hans'—literally meaning those who have accessed the 'supreme type of enlightenment'.

The alphabet 'Ha' of the word 'Hans' is sounded by the vibration of the exhaled wind passing through the vocal cords present in the throat or the wind pipe which connects to the nose, while the alphabet 'Sa' is sounded by the root of the tongue which opens into the mouth when the breath is inhaled. Both the nose and the mouth open in the same cavity called the throat. Hence, the inter relationship between 'Ha' and 'Sa' is evident. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is like the divine swan, but he was unaware of his own divinity and sublimity, his exalted and noble stature, till that was pointed out to him. So he must become one like a 'swan', remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan.

During the twenty-four hour period covering a single day and night, a person inhales and exhales, or breathes, roughly twenty-one thousand times, because each cycle of inhalation and exhalation is equivalent to saying one Mantra 'Hans' consisting of the two syllables 'Ha and Sa' (refer Dhyānbindu Upanishad, verse no. 63).

Hans, the divine Swan, is also one of the twenty-four incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Vishnu had once appeared as a divine Swan to preach the four celestial sages Sankaadi who were the mental sons of the creator Brahma.

It so happened that Sankaadi approached Brahma and wanted to know how can someone, who wished to have Moksha (final liberation and deliverance from this material world; freedom from attachment to the sense objects of this world; emancipation and salvation), effectively control his mind and sub-conscious and divert them away from the material charms of the world and its sense objects, and towards the inner self where the Atma, the pure consciousness, resides?

Brahma was confused and did not have the answer. So they meditated upon Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Being, from whom Brahma was born. Thus Vishnu appeared as a divine Swan. The sages could not recognise the Lord in that form and asked who he was. Then Vishnu, in his form as a Swan, preached the great tenets of metaphysics and Vedanta to Sankaadi. Thus, this revelation of Vishnu as a Swan was an embodiment of the greatest and the most refined form of spiritual knowledge, erudition, wisdom and enlightenment. Henceforth, Swan came to be known as a synonym for these eclectic and divine virtues. This story appears in Srimad Bhagwat, 11/13.

The Swan is depicted as a vehicle of Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge and wisdom. In other words, those who worship Swan ride on the crest of knowledge, wisdom, erudition, sagacity and enlightenment.

The Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 82-83 of Sam Veda tradition describes this Swan in the context of Yoga.

The Dhyani Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 24 and 61-65, of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition which primarily deals with meditation and contemplation on Brahm in order to obtain emancipation and salvation of the soul of the creature says that the supreme transcendental Brahm, known also as Pranav, resides in the heart of all the living beings in the form of a Hansa. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is a personification of Brahm and is like the divine Swan, but he was unaware of his divinity and sublimity, his exalted stature, till that was pointed out to him in this verse. So he must become one like a 'swan', remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must do not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan. The highlight of its verse no. 63 is that it asserts that the Mantra 'Hans' is superior to the Gyatri Mantra.

The Yogshikha Upanishad describes in Canto 6, verse nos. 52-54 how the creature continues to do an involuntary Japa using the Mantra 'Hans' throughout his life while narrating how the creature continues to be buffeted and tossed around by the vital winds called Pran and Apaan.

The Brahm Vidya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda has a number of verses dedicated to the concept of Hans and goes on to assert that it is the best Mantra with which a wise and enlightened ascetic should do Yoga (meditation) as well as Japa (repetition of Mantra). Such verses are nos. 16, 20-28, 34, 60-64 and 78-79.

The Hanso-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition is exclusively dedicated to explain the concept of the pure conscious Atma by way of using the metaphor of a Hans.

The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 5, verse nos. 52, 54-55 describe the Hans Mantra besides asserting that the Atma, the pure conscious 'self' of the creature, is Hans (i.e. Brahm) personified.

References for the term 'Hans' or divine Swan—(a) Krishna Yajur Veda—Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 6; Canto 6, verse no. 15; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 3-4; Dhyani Bindu Upanishad, verse nos. 24, 61-65; Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse nos. 16, 20-28, 34, 60-64, 78-79; Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-132, Canto 2, verse nos. 9-11, Canto 6, verse no. 20, 35-36, 53-54; Yogtattva Upanishad, verse no. 99. (b) Shukla Yajur Veda—Hanso-panishad is exclusively dedicated to explain the concept of the pure conscious Atma by way of using the metaphor of a Hans. (c) Sam Veda—Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 31-35, 82-83, 93. (d) Atharva Veda—Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 4; Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 4, 12-22, 26-27; Canto 2, verse nos. 1-3; Mahavakya Upanishad, verse no. 6; Hayagriva Upanishad, verse no. 10.]

सद्गुरुसमीपे सकलविद्यापरिश्रमज्ञो भूत्वा विद्वान्सर्वमैहिकामुष्मिकसुखश्रमं  
ज्ञात्वैषणात्रयवासनात्रयममत्वाहंकारादिकं वमनान्नमिव हेयमधिगम्य मोक्षमार्गैकसाधनो ब्रह्मचर्यं समाप्य  
गृही भवेत् । गृहाद्वनी भूत्वा प्रव्रजेत् । यदि वेतरथा ब्रह्मचर्यादेव प्रव्रजेद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वा । अथ  
पुनरव्रती वा व्रती वा स्नातको वाऽस्नातको वोत्सन्नाग्निरनग्निको वा यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेदिति  
बुद्ध्वा सर्वसंसारेषु विरक्तो ब्रह्मचारी गृही वानप्रस्थो वा पितरं मातरं कलत्रपुत्रमाप्तबन्धुवर्गं तदभावे  
शिष्यं सहवासिनं वाऽनुमोदयित्वा तद्धैके प्राजापत्यामेवेष्टिं कुर्वन्ति । तदु तथा न कुर्यात् ।  
आग्नेय्यामेव कुर्यात् । अग्निर्हि प्राणः प्राणमेवैतया करोति । त्रैधातवीयामेव कुर्यात् । एतयैव त्रयो  
धातवो यदुत सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति । अयं ते योनिर्ऋत्वियो यतो जातो अरोचथाः । तं जानन्नग्न

आरोहाथा नो वर्धया रयिमित्यनेन मन्त्रेणाग्निमाजिघ्रेत् । एष वा अग्नेर्योनिर्यः प्राणं गच्छ स्वां योनिं  
गच्छ स्वाहेत्येवमेवैतदाह । ग्रामाच्छ्रोत्रियागारादग्निमाहृत्य स्वविध्युक्तक्रमेण पूर्ववदग्निमाजिघ्रेत् ।  
यद्यातुरो वाग्निं न विन्देदप्सु जुहुयात् । आपो वै सर्वा देवताः सर्वाभ्यो देवताभ्यो जुहोमि स्वाहेति  
हुत्वोद्धृत्य प्राश्नीयात् साज्यं हविरनामयम् । एष विधिर्वीराध्वाने वाऽनाशके वापां प्रवेशे वाऽग्निप्रवेशे  
वा महाप्रस्थाने वा । यद्यातुरः स्यान्मनसा वाचा वा संन्यसेदेष पन्थाः ॥२॥

sadgurusamīpe sakalavidyāparīśramajñō bhūtvā  
vidvānsarvamaihikāmuṣmikasukhaśramam  
jñātvaīṣaṇātrayavāsanātrayamamatvāhaṅkāradikam  
vamanānnamiva heyamadhigamya mokṣamārgaikasādhano  
brahmacaryam samāpya gr̥hī bhavet /  
gr̥hadvānī bhūtvā pravrajat /  
yadi vetarathā brahmacaryādeva pravrajedgr̥hādvā vānādvā /  
atha punaravratī vā vratī vā snātako vā'snātako votsannāgniranagniko vā  
yadahareva virajettadahareva pravrajediti buddhavā sarvasaṃsāreṣu virakto  
brahmacārī gr̥hī vānaprastho vā pitaram mātarām  
kalatraputramāptabandhuvargam tadabhāve śiṣyam savāsinam  
vā'numodayitvā taddhaike prājāpatyāmeveṣṭhiṃ kurvanti /  
tadu tathā na kuryāt / āgneyyāmeva kuryāt /  
agnirhi prāṇaḥ prāṇamevaitayā karoti /  
traidhātaviyāmeva kuryāt /  
etayaiva trayo dhātavo yaduta sattvam rajastama iti /  
ayam te yonir̥tviyo yato jāto arocathāḥ /  
taṃ jānannagna ārohāthā no vardhayā rayimityanena mantreṇāgnimājighret /  
eṣa vā agneryonir̥yaḥ prāṇam gaccha swām yoniṃ gaccha  
swāhetyevamevaitadāha /  
grāmācchrotriyaḥgārādagnimāhr̥tya svaavidhyuktakrameṇa  
pūrvavadagnimājighret /  
yadyāturo vāgniṃ na vindedapsu juhuyāt /  
āpo vai sarvā devatāḥ sarvābhyo devatābhyo juhomi svāheti  
hutvodhr̥tya prāśnīyāt sājyam haviranāmayam /  
eṣa vidhirvīrādhvāne vā'nāsake vāpām praveṣe vā'gnipraveṣe  
vā mahāprasthāne vā /  
yadyāturaḥ syānmanasā vācā vā saṃnyasedeṣa panthāḥ // 2 //

2. [Lord Adi Narayan preached—] ‘A wise and erudite aspirant should first acquire knowledge under the guidance of a learned and self-realised Guru (moral preceptor and teacher) of high repute. This would enlighten him of the reality of this world and its material objects so much so that he understands and realises that all the comforts and pleasures of the world in which he lives as well as the world where he wishes to go after death (i.e. the heaven where he wishes to go after having lived a righteous life to enjoy its heavenly comforts and pleasures) are actually like a burden on his soul. [In other words, by studying the scriptures himself and being enlightened about their eclectic principles upon being taught by his learned teacher who explains their hidden meaning to him, he realises the falsehood of this material world and the truth of the Atma which is his own ‘self’ and pure consciousness, and hence the futility of pursuing the world and the comforts and pleasures of the senses either in this life or in the after-life become evident to him. Therefore, once he has attained this spiritual

wisdom and knowledge of the Truth, he shakes off the deluding, artificial and entrapping world, and instead endeavours to attain eternity and true happiness that comes with distancing one's self from all delusions that are typical hallmarks of this material world, and diverting one's attention towards the grand spiritual truths of creation. Of course, such efforts would help one to become 'realised and enlightened', and with it would come bliss and happiness of an eternal and infinite kind, the bliss and happiness that is sustainable and true.]

This wisdom and enlightenment fills him with total detachment towards the three overpowering desires that a man has in this world—viz. desire for a son, desire for material prosperity and acquisition of wealth, and desire for fame, power, authority and majesty in this world.

He also develops total disinterest in the three types of Vasanas (worldly passions and lust) and abandons them. These three Vasanas are the following—Lok Vasana, Deha Vasana and Shashtra Vasana<sup>1</sup>.

He treats all sorts of attachments, attractions and infatuations ('Mamatva') as well as ego, pride and haughtiness ('Ahankar') as being equivalent to vomit, and therefore most reprehensible, disgusting, and worthy of being discarded.

With this wisdom firmly ingrained in his sub-conscious, he completes his education under the able guidance of a learned Guru while strictly observing the eclectic principles of Brahmacharya. [This is called 'Brahmacharya Ashram' and is the first phase in the life of a man. 'Brahmacharya' is a life of strict self-control, abstinence and continence, not only in sexual terms but taken in a very holistic manner involving strict control over all the organs of the body and total abstinence from numerous indulgences. A student is expected to observe strict discipline in order to concentrate his energy on studies without distraction, as well as to inculcate the virtue of self control that would come in good stead to him later on in his life.]

Having graduated with these grand and magnificent spiritual values firmly established in his psyche, he enters the second stage of life as a householder, called 'Grihastha Ashram'.

On completion of the second phase as a Grihastha he should step into the third phase of life called 'Vaanprastha'—literally meaning 'heading for the forest'. [This is simply a metaphor for having turned his back to the humdrum world and spending the rest of the life in search of peace and serenity which are symbolized by the term 'forest'.]

Finally, at the culmination of this third phase he should become a 'Sanyasi' or a 'Parivrajak'. [That is, now he should be completely unattached with anything, even to the extent that he keeps no company and avoids pilgrim sites. For him, the search for the Atma is the ultimate pilgrimage and the body itself is the holy site where the Atma lives.]

This is the general rule, but in exceptional cases a man can enter the phase of Parivrajak (i.e. he can become a renunciate Sanyasi, or a monk, hermit, mendicant or friar) directly from the Brahmacharya or Grihastha Ashrams without having had to go through the traditional path or the well-established routine procedure, or the various phases or the stages that one has to pass through to become a full-fledged Sanyasi.

Hence, whether or not a person has observed religious sacraments and vows, whether he has studied the scriptures or is illiterate in such matters (i.e. is un-lettered, uninitiated, uneducated, does not follow the tenets of religion, has not observed any sacraments, is unaware of scriptural concepts such as the Atma and Brahm etc.), whether he has done the fire sacrifice or not (i.e. whether or not he worships the Lord by offering him oblations through the sacred fire as ordained by the Vedas; whether or



not he has purified himself as symbolized by his worshipping the fire)—whenever sincere and true sense of renunciation, detachment, disinterest and dispassion sprouts in his heart, he can become a Parivrajak (a Sanyasi).

According to established tradition, when a man who belongs to either of the three phases of life called a Brahmacharya, Grihastha or Vaanprastha develops true and complete detachment from this world and is desirous of taking the vows of a Parivrajak, he should first take formal permission from his parents, wife, son(s), kith and kin, friends and companions, as well as his followers or disciples or those who are dependent upon him in any way. Then he must do the 'Prajapatya Ishti Yagya'. [This sacrifice is a special fire sacrifice done at the time of breaking off all connections with this world and stepping on the path of Sanyas. It is meant to offer oblations to Prajapati Brahma, the creator, and requesting the Lord to take care of those the aspirant leaves behind as well as of himself.]

But this principle does not apply on a man who wishes to take the vows of a Parivrajak way of life directly (i.e. even before or during the above three phases) without bothering to undergo the formal process. [This is because he is so eager to renounce this world, he is so eager to search the Truth and discard the falsehood, he is so eager to find liberation and deliverance that he does not wish to waste time in formalities and seeking permission from anyone. He need not wait for someone's consent or approval to become a Sanyasi; what if his parents or wife or son do not agree and create a hurdle in his spiritual path? Besides this, he has come to realise that all relations are limited to the gross body as the Atma has no relations whatsoever, for it is an eternally free and independent entity. The wise and enlightened aspirant has already understood the truth of the statement that the body is not his true identity, and neither is it that of the person from whom permission is sought. So, who should seek permission from whom, and who is empowered to refuse? So, why should he waste time and energy on pretensions and falsehood; why should he appear to be courteous and nice by asking permission from anyone, or appearing to be apologetic for his leaving his kith and kin alone? The very fact that true enlightenment has arisen in his bosom that has motivated and inspired him to throw away the falsehoods and artificial relations of the world, and instead move towards the great relationship that his Atma has with the supreme Atma known as Brahm would automatically make him free from all obligations of having to seek permissions or observing formalities in order to renounce the world and its shackles. He feels absolutely independent and unbound by any fetters to this world. Since self-realisation that attends achievement of true spiritual wisdom and enlightenment has taught him that his 'true self' is the Atma and not the gross body, and that all relationships are limited to the gross body and the Atma has no kind of relations, he feels not at all obliged to seek anyone permission to break free from all bondages pertaining to the body, and 'relationships of the world' are like these bondages. The Atma is as free and unshackled as the air element. So when the Atma flies free, it need not have any regrets or feel apologetic.]

Therefore, instead of doing the Prajapatya Ishti Yagya he must do the fire sacrifice called the 'Aagneya Ishti Yagya'. [This is the oblations paid to the Fire God or the Fire Element which is now requested to take up residence in the inner-self of the aspirant. This is a symbolic sacrifice to signify that the aspirant has burnt all connections with the external world, has burned all his spiritual impurities, has empowered himself with the power, potentials and authority of the Fire which is enshrined in his bosom, and now onwards he would worship the Atma as an embodiment of the holy Fire. Now onwards, he does not have to worship the sacred fire externally, but he offers his oblations and worship to it inside his own body. For

such worship, whatever he eats or drinks is like an offering and oblation. Similarly, each of his breath is also like an offering. Indeed, this form of internal fire sacrifice and symbolic worship is regarded as the being of the best kind and the wisest way of worshipping the Supreme Being. This concept is further elaborate in the following paragraph.]

The Fire is the 'Pran' or life (both of the entire creation at the macro level of existence, as well as of the individual man at the micro level of creation, because without the warmth, energy and light provided by the fire no life is feasible). It is on the strength of the fire that the Pran Vayu (the vital wind) carries out its various life-infusing and life-sustaining functions, and it is on the strength of the fire that the air shows movement. [The vital winds in the body are the ones responsible for all the small and big functions carried out by the different organs of the man's body. The 'fire element' plays a very important role in the body as is evident from the fact that if the fire element decides to calm down, or the body becomes cold, all its activities would automatically come to a standstill, and the man would die. A warm body is equivalent to a living body, while a cool body is a corpse. On the more physical plane we observe that when a fire burns, a breeze begins to blow, indicating 'movement' in the otherwise static air element. The fire heats the air and creates convection currents which make the otherwise static air move. This is most evident in hot summer afternoons when hot winds pick up speed and develop into a storm as the temperature rises during the afternoon hours on the plains and deserts. The 'fire element' is a metaphor for dynamism, vigour, vitality, energy, strength and life.]

An aspirant should offer three types of symbolic oblations to this fire sacrifice. These three symbolic offerings are the three Gunas such as the Sata Guna, the Raja Guna and the Tama Guna that are inherent to all living beings in this world. [In other words, he must burn all the three distinguishing qualities that are inherently present in all living beings, and which decide their behaviour, thought process, personality, character traits etc. A Sanyasi should develop complete equanimity and total neutrality in all matters. He must show no good, bad or mediocre behaviour that is determined by any of these Gunas; he must have no emotions determined by the dominance of one or the other of these Gunas; he should not harbour any specific qualities that can be used to ascribe him with some particular distinctive characteristic. He must live a life of anonymity, equanimity and total neutrality. Thus, offering of the three Gunas to the fire is a metaphoric way of saying that a true Sanyasi dissolves his individuality and personal identity to become universal like the Atma which he has now recognized to be his 'true self and identity'.]

Then he must smell the fire while saying the following hymn—'Oh Fire God! The Pran (i.e. the life or 'consciousness' as well as the vital winds or airs present inside my body) is the cause of your origin. [That is, it is because my body has 'consciousness' in it that it is said to be alive, and a living body is the abode of the fire element, for as soon as the life or consciousness leaves the body it becomes dead, and the fire element immediately leaves it too. The word 'Pran' also means the vital winds or airs that keep the body alive and active. The vital winds control and regulate the body by controlling and regulating the functioning of all the individual organs of the body. Since it is an established fact of science that air is needed to start the fire and keep it burning, and that no fire can survive without air, this stanza also means that it is the presence of the vital winds, collectively called the 'Pran', which helps the 'fire of life' burning inside the body. This physical fact and relationship between the air element and the fire element is depicted metaphorically by saying that the 'Pran is the father of the fire element'. Just like a father who not only provides the spark that

produces the child but does his best to ensure that his off spring does not die a premature death, the air element present inside the body also ensures that the fire of life burning inside the body of the Sanyasi is not blown out. In other words, the Pran ensures that life is not snuffed out of the Sanyasi before its time for his Atma to emerge from the prison of the gross body to merge with the cosmic Atma known as the Parmatma, a development that provides the Sanyasi with his final Mukti or Moksha, i.e. when he finds his final spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation.]

Being aware of this fact, please enter it and subtly establish yourself in the Pran. [That is, the fire element is invited to establish its self in the body of the aspirant in a symbolic manner so that his vital winds are kept energized and strengthened, and he is given sufficient vigour and stamina to bear with the harsh realities of a Sanyas way of life during which all the physical comforts of the world are lacking.]

Since you (the Fire God) have come into being from the Pran (consciousness and vital airs that give life as explained above), and since you are requested to take up your abode in it, you are also requested to impart your glorious illumination and dynamism to it. [In other words, you must provide my consciousness represented by my Atma with divine illumination in the form of truthful knowledge, intellect, wisdom, erudition, sagacity, and the mental ability to discriminate between the truth and the false. At the same time as this, you must also ensure that my vital winds or airs that sustain my physical body are not deprived of the necessary dynamism, strength, vigour, vitality and energy.] Bless me so that I can obtain better results in my spiritual pursuits and attain greater heights of spiritual success. Let me be blessed with enhanced energy, strength, courage, stamina, vigour and drive to be able to move steadily ahead in my endeavours and reach the pinnacle of success in it. [When the Pran or life-consciousness present in the body is fully strengthened, the aspirant would be empowered to pursue meditation and contemplation without any hindrance, such as lack of sufficient energy and strength needed to cope with the strenuous demands of Yoga. Re-vitalized Pran would ensure re-vitalized body, and with the body in a proper condition the rigours of life as a Sanyasi would be easy to cope with.]

Oh Fire God! You are earnestly requested to establish your esteemed self in the Pran which is regarded as your origin. [The word used in the text is 'Yoni', meaning a womb. The embryo is conceived and nourished in the mother's womb, and the latter is therefore regarded as the place from where the former originated. In the case of the fire element, this symbolic womb is the Pran or life-consciousness because if there is no consciousness in this creation there would be no life, and hence there would be no need or use of the fire. 'Pran' also means the vital airs or winds, and these airs or winds keep the fire element alive and active inside the gross body. As has been explained above, both the factors of 'consciousness' and the 'vital airs' are used as synonyms for 'Pran' in this verse. Therefore, both are regarded as the affable and doting 'father' of the fire element in a symbolic way. In the present context, the aspirant requests the fire element to subtly establish its self in his body so that he can easily cope with the rigours of the Sanyas way of life. He would not get proper nourishment because he would have to depend upon begged food, he would not have proper clothes to keep himself warm, or warm bedding to sleep upon, he would not have the comforts of a home and hearth, and therefore would be left on the mercy of the elements. Weakness of the body would also make his vital winds weak, and hence it is very important to invoke the blessings of the Fire God so as to overcome these and other such grave hurdles of the Sanyas way of life. If the internal fire is burning

robustly, it would be so much the easier for him to overcome all the problems that he might have to face during the rough and tough life of Sanyas. Again, a well-kindled fire would speed up his progress in Yoga and help him achieve success in such practices as activation of the Kundalini and raising of the vital winds from the lower parts of the body to the head where he expects to experience the bliss of realisation of consciousness.]

So, please go there (in the Pran) and take up your honourable residence in it. [The word used in the text is 'Gachha' which means 'to go'.]

With this prayer, the aspiring Parivrajak should say 'Swaha<sup>2</sup>' to finish his invocation and offerings. [The word 'Swaha' is said while making offering to the sacred fire as it represents the mouth of the Fire God. When the worshipper has sufficiently pleased the Fire God, the latter opens his mouth to accept the offerings made by the worshipper.]

For the purpose of performing the above worship fire is needed, and it should be obtained from the household of a Srotريا person (i.e. someone who performs daily fire sacrifice according the principles laid down in the Vedas, and uses the latter's hymns for this purpose). After obtaining it, the aspirant should smell it (as described above in this paragraph). [The 'smelling' is done as a mark of showing affection and reverence. It is like the modern practice of kissing some dear one on the cheek in western culture, and on the head in Indian culture where the father or anyone elder than the person touches the latter's head and smells it as a formal gesture of blessing, love and affection.]

In case formal fire is not available due to any reason, or when it is not practically feasible to perform the fire sacrifice in its physical form, and the aspirant is very eager to become a Parivrajak without delay then he should complete the ritual by simply using water (in the place of the fire).

He should think that the water element known as 'Apaha' personified as the Water God is the primary origin of all the other Gods, including the Fire God. Hence, he should worship the Water God as follows—'Oh Water God! You are a personified form of all the Gods taken together. Therefore, I am offering my oblations to you (and it would be equivalent to offering it to each of the Gods at once).' Then he should say 'Swaha' and make the offering.

Once the offerings to the Gods is complete, he should pick up the remaining material used for such offerings, including Ghee (clarified butter) used for the purpose, and accept them (eat them) himself. [This is to signify that all the Gods reside in his own bosom. It indicates that they have accepted his gesture by imbibing the food offered to them. At the same time it also signifies that the spiritual aspirant is aware of the fact that the supreme God resides in his own self as the Atma to whom he is finally making his offerings by the symbolic gesture of eating all the remaining things himself. It has been said in the Upanishads that the body is a microcosm of the entire creation, and that all the Gods, who incidentally represent the forces of Nature in a personified form, took up their residences in this body at the micro level of creation just like they lived in the heaven at the macro level of creation—refer Rig Veda's Aiteriyo-panishad. Therefore it is not inappropriate to say that the offerings are made in a symbolic manner to all the Gods living inside the body of the Sanyasi.]

This process is used by those who follow the path prescribed for warriors, or those who wish to abandon the physical gross body by fasting, or those who wish to leave the mortal world by entering water and submerging (drowning) in it, or those who wish to cremate their gross body themselves by entering a fire that is voluntarily lit by themselves.

It is ordained that if one is really interested and sincere then he should not wait for formalities to be completed, and instead accept the vows of Sanyas mentally, or even by saying so and making a declaration to this effect (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *three Vasanas*—(a) *Lok Vasana*—this is the desire and greed for wealth, fame, sense objects of the material world, territorial gains, authority and powers, majesty, pomp and pelf etc. The Vasanas relating to the world are the various attractions and allurements that his apparently enchanting and captivating world presents to a person. It also refers to the various and endless responsibilities and obligations, real and imaginary, that a person has, or imagines he has towards this world.

Sometimes the Lok Vasanas overlaps the Deha Vasana as often they are interconnected. For example, one's 'Vasanas' pertaining to one's son, property, material wealth and other assets which a person has acquired by the efforts made by his body and which help him to get established in this world and enjoy enhanced comforts and pleasures as well as respect and honour that such acquisitions entitle him to in this physical world also come under this category of Vasanas. All such relationships that exist in this world, such as his relatives, his contacts, his friends, his peers and compatriots, along with his obligations, his contracts and his responsibilities related to them are called Lok Vasanas. It would also include all things done by him in this world to appease those who are related to him with this body.

(b) *Shastra Vasana*—this is the desire and yearnings related to scriptures and ancient literature, such as a desire to become an expert in them and be recognised as such, the desire to study them more and more, acquiring scholarship and literal expertise in them with its accompanying fame, renown, glory, honour, respect and financial prosperity, become much sought after and acquire a wide follower-ship based on these qualities and honours bestowed upon them by the world by the virtue of their unique abilities and expertise of the scriptures etc. But usually such knowledge is superficial, and the so-called expert of scriptures relies more on their letter rather than on their spirit, engrossing himself in endless discussions and debates leading to confusions and contradictions instead of solving them. The scriptures are vast and like a fathomless sea. Trying to realise the Supreme Truth by delving into the depths of the scriptures is like an attempt at extracting a single piece of pearl by churning the whole ocean. Though it is theoretically possible in thousand of years of continuous effort, but practically it is impossible and incredulous to even think of such a success; it is a too far-fetched notion. It is rare to find a truly wise and enlightened soul amongst worldly scholars and orators, for the latter's erudition is limited to gaining fame and name and nothing more.

(c) *Deha Vasana*—this is the insatiable desire and passion related to the gratification of the sense organs, such as becoming licentious, engrossing oneself in enjoyment of worldly sensual objects, and all other types of indulgences and gratifications. The 'Vasanas' pertaining to the body also relate to the attachments that one has with one's son, property and wealth which a person has acquired and enjoyed with his body, and the world around him—his relatives, his fame, his contacts, his friends, his obligation, contracts and responsibilities. It also means gratification of the sense organs of the body as well as to appease those who are related to him with this body so that they continue to serve and help him and give comfort and pleasure to his body.

Now, when we talk of the Atma as pure consciousness or an embodiment of light, the question arises 'how can we obtain the clearest perception of that reality?' The greatest exponent of Vedanta philosophy, sage Adi Sankaracharya prescribes the following four paths—(i) discrimination between the eternal and truthful, and the non-eternal and non-truthful, (ii) renunciation of desires for sensual gratification and enjoyment of pleasures from this materialistic world, (iii) development of six divine

eclectic wealth—self control, surrender, faith, forbearance, peace/tranquility and poise of the mind, and (iv) sincere desire for liberation and deliverance, because it is only then that the creature will try to find ways to achieve it.

(ii) Another classification is based on the proportion of *bad* or *good* qualities inherent in and integral to the nature of a man. Therefore, there are broadly classified into Good Vasanas, and Bad Vasanas depending upon the proportion of good quality and the bad quality that is inherent in the man and forms his innate character. These qualities are called the Gunas, and they are three in number—viz. Sata Guna, Raja Guna and Tama Guna. Hence, we have *Satvic Vasana*, *Rajic Vasana* and *Tamsic Vasana*.

The *Satvic Vasanas* are those desires that are determined by the predominance of the best quality called Sata in a man. Such a man is inclined to do auspicious deeds and take noble actions. He is naturally inclined to and attracted towards those things in this world which help him to cultivate higher values in life, such as the desire of serving others selflessly, being compassionate, relinquishing one's right for the general welfare of others, spending time in finding ways to achieve knowledge of the 'self', study of the scriptures and generally spending life in noble thoughts and deeds, etc.

The *Rajic Vasana* is the middle path which creates desires for name, fame and power and their accompanying laurels and majesty. Such tendencies need commensurate actions so that they can be effectuated. Hence such a man would be engrossed in the world and its activities; he would serve others but would have a certain degree of self-interest in whatever he does; he would judge everything but with himself as the overriding factor. He would study the scriptures but not for his spiritual well being but to gain money and fame and a large follower-ship.

Finally, the lowest of them is the *Tamsic Vasana* which makes a man pervert, sinful, selfish, indulgent and indolent to the extreme. He would snatch other's right in order to fulfill his own desires; he would study the scriptures only to find fault with them and ridicule them. He would not have any qualms in making others suffer by his actions and derive immense satisfaction and pleasure in it. He would have no scruples and a sense of probity and propriety in what he does in order to satisfy his desires, wants, yearnings, aspirations and expectations.

It ought to be noted that there are no water-tight compartments in these three types of Vasanas; they are diffused and more often than not difficult to differentiate one from the other. Their intensity may change with the change in the person's attitude and the level at which his thought processes as well as his mind and intellect operate as he develops wisdom and knowledge.

Vasanas arise due to one's desire to gratify the natural instincts of the sense organs. Such as for example, the eye has a natural urge to see beautiful objects. So if a man falls prey to this urge, his mind and intellect would come into play and the man would then try everything in his means and power to acquire that object which pleases the eye, thereby dragging other organs in this quagmire. Each organ would then make its own demand, and the demands never cease but go on multiplying in a compound manner. Actions prompted by the element of ego and egocentric desires such as the attitude of 'I, Me and Mine' leave in their wake a chain of desires and wants which keep us prodding, propelling and compelling to satisfy them, and the chain of Vasanas is set in motion.

So the easy way to stem the surge of Vasanas and finally obliterate them is to first analyse one's natural inclinations and tendencies, and then slowly divert them from lower level to a higher level by conscious effort and diligence. One of the methods to do this is to do deeds but without expecting any rewards from them—which is at the core of Karma Yoga. With this attitude, the accumulation of Vasanas is gradually exhausted. Another way is to acquire truthful knowledge by studying the scriptures directly or getting to know about their great tenets and teachings from others. This helps to remove 'Agyan' or ignorance of the reality and truth which is at the very root

of the creation of Vasanas in the first place. If one becomes wise and gets acquainted with great metaphysical truths about the 'self' and the Atma along with the nature of existence and its essential form as well as the real goal of human life in spiritual terms, it would be natural and logical that he would be more inclined to overcome all sorts of Vasanas, including the Satvic ones. In fact, he would have no Vasanas at all.

The Vasanas have been described in detail in the *Varaaha Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse no. 70, and Canto 4, verse nos. 16, 20, 23.

In *Muktiko-panishad*, canto 2 of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, Lord Ram explains to his most ardent devotee, the wise and enlightened Hanuman the concept of Vasanas and how to purge and control them in order to attain emancipation and salvation.

The *Yog Kundalini Upanishad* of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 3, verse nos. 18-19 describes what is known as the 'good Vasana'.

*How to overcome the Vasanas*—Generally speaking, the drag of Vasanas (i.e. inherent tendencies, notions, innate habits, desires, yearnings etc.) of a creature, which create a hindrance in its contact with the pure self, can be overcome by the following four methods—(i) Method of persuasion—the creature tries to convince itself through reasoning, discrimination, self analysis and gentle prodding that its true identity is not the body but the soul or Atma which is the real and truthful self. (ii) Method of purification—the creature loves itself so much that its mind is blocked from all other love. This can be purged by thinking of the wider world as the beautiful extension of the self. Thus, selfishness is gradually reduced and it is replaced by love, compassion and graciousness. (iii) Method of eradication of desires—this can be done by selfless action and removal of ego. (iv) Method of forceful confrontation—the seeker should confront its mind about its wayward behaviour and force it to overcome past habits and tendencies. Efforts should be made to control the mind's restlessness—diligently, courteously and persistently.

<sup>2</sup>*Swaha*—The word *Swaha* is used to offer any offering to the ritualistic fire during the fire sacrifice. It represents the mouth of the Fire God. When the worshipper has sufficiently pleased the Fire God, the latter opens his mouth to accept the offerings made by the worshipper. The offering is in the form of clarified butter, cereals, sweets and fruits etc. With each offering, the word is pronounced to symbolize acceptance of it by the Fire God.

The word means 'hail, hail to you; may a blessing rest upon you!' *Swaha* in mythology is a personification of the oblation offered to the fire sacrifice. *Swaha* is also depicted as the daughter of Daksha Prajapati and wife of Agni, the Fire-God; she is said to preside over burnt offerings. Her body consists of the four Vedas and her limbs are the branches of the Vedas, called Angas. In some texts, *Swaha* is also depicted as the wife of Rudra Pashupati.

It must be noted that the word *Swaha* is usually pronounced while making offerings to the fire pit of the fire sacrifice, but more broadly it means submission, humility and offering the best that one has to the chosen deity. In the case where this word is said while offering prayers to the chosen deity by using Mantras, it means to offer one's own self with the greatest of reverence, humility and submission before the Lord being worshipped.]

स्वस्थक्रमेणैव चेदात्मश्राद्धं विरजाहोमं कृत्वाऽग्निमात्मन्यारोप्य लौकिकवैदिकसामर्थ्यं  
स्वचतुर्दशकरणप्रवृत्तिं च पुत्रे समारोप्य तदभावे शिष्ये वा तदभावे स्वात्मन्येव वा ब्रह्मा त्वं  
यज्ञस्त्वमत्यभिमन्य ब्रह्मभावनया ध्यात्वा सावित्रीप्रवेशपूर्वकमप्सु सर्वविद्यार्थस्वरूपां ब्राह्मण्याधारां  
वेदमातरं क्रमाद्व्याहृतिषु त्रिषु प्रविलाप्य व्याहृतित्रयमकारोकारमकारेषु प्रविलाप्य तत्सावधानेनापः प्राश्य  
प्रणवेन शिखामुत्कृष्य यज्ञोपवीतं छित्त्वा वस्त्रमपि भूमौ वाऽप्सु वा विसृज्य ॐ भूः स्वाहा ॐ भुवः

स्वाहा ॐ सुवः स्वाहेत्यनेन जातरूपधरो भूत्वा स्वं रूपं ध्यायन्नुनः पृथक् प्रणवव्याहृतिपूर्वकं मनसा वचसापि संन्यस्तं मया संन्यस्तं मया संन्यस्तं मयेति मन्द्रमध्यमतारध्वनिभिस्त्रिवारं त्रिगुणीकृतप्रैषोच्चारणं कृत्वा प्रणवैकध्यानपरायणः सन्नभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो मत्तः स्वाहेत्यूर्ध्वबाहुभूत्वा ब्रह्माहमस्मीति तत्त्वमस्यादिमहावाक्यार्थस्वरूपानुसंधानं कुर्वन्नुदीचीं दिशं गच्छेत् । जातरूपधरश्चरेत् । एष संन्यासः ॥३॥

svasthakrameṇaiva cedātmaśrāddhaṃ virajāhomaṃ  
 kṛtvāgnimātmanyāropya laukikavaidikasāmarthyam  
 svacaturdaśakaraṇapravṛttiṃ ca putre samāropya tadabhāve śiṣye vā  
 tadabhāve svātmanyeva vā brahmā tvaṃ yajñastvamityabhimantrya  
 brahmabhāvanayā dhyātvā sāvitṛpraveśapūrvakamapsu  
 sarvavidyārthasvarūpāṃ brāhmaṇyādihārāṃ vedamātaraṃ kramādvyaḥṛtiṣu  
 triṣu pravilāpya vyāhṛtitrayamakārokaṛamakāreṣu pravilāpya  
 tatsāvadhānenāpaḥ prāśya praṇavena śikhāmutkṛṣya yajñopavītaṃ  
 chittvā vastramapi bhūmau vā'psu vā visṛjya oṃ bhūḥ svāhā oṃ bhuvah  
 svāhā oṃ suvah svāhetyanena jātārūpadharo bhūtvā svaṃ rūpaṃ  
 dhyāyanpunaḥ pṛthak praṇavavyāhṛtipūrvakaṃ manasā vacasāpi saṃnyastaṃ  
 mayā saṃnyastaṃ mayā saṃnyastaṃ mayeti  
 mandramadhyamatāradhvanibhistrivāraṃ triguṇīkṛtapreṣoccāraṇaṃ  
 kṛtvā praṇavaikadhyānaparāyaṇaḥ sannabhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo mattaḥ  
 svāhetyūrdhvbāhurbhūtvā brahmāhamasmīti  
 tattvamasyādimahāvākyaṛthasvarūpānusandhānaṃ kurvannudicīṃ diśaṃ  
 gacchet / jātārūpadharaścaret / eṣa saṃnyāsaḥ // 3 //

3. After having taken the vows of Sanyas in a systematic manner by offering oblations to the Atma (i.e. worshipping the pure 'self' and being firmly convinced that this Atma is the supreme Brahm personified), purging it of all worldly impurities (symbolizing various Vaasnas and Vrittis or worldly desires, habits and obligations pertaining to this world that all human beings have to a greater or lesser degree), and doing the 'Virja Hom' (the fire sacrifice done at the time of taking the vows of Sanyas, and offering oblations to the sacred fire) whereby the sacred fire element is established in his own Atma (as narrated in detail in verse no. 2 above), the aspiring Parivrajak (Sanyasi) should break off all connections with the world by passing on his responsibilities and obligations to his son. [It is like a ceremony of 'passing the baton'. It is a part of the cycle of creation whereby the old gives way smoothly to the new, and continuity is maintained without a hitch.]

In case a son is not available, then the same procedure should be followed for one's disciple or follower. If any disciple or follower is not available then the same procedure should followed and the inheritance should be passed on to one's own Atma. [The Atma is a universal entity as it is pure consciousness that is uniform and universal in nature. The implication here is that in case no specific person is available to accept the inheritance or the legacy being left behind by the Sanyasi, he should leave it to the society as a whole. It is such a grand vision of inheritance envisioned and expounded by Upanishadic thinkers that has the essential idea which says that nothing belongs to a man, he should never think that he has exclusive right to anything because everything is to be left behind when one makes his final exit from this world. Since the Atma is a universal entity and all human beings have equal right over what the Lord has provided in this world, therefore whosoever enjoys the things



left behind by the Sanyasi is deemed to be enjoyed by the Atma which is a personified form of the Lord himself. Unless the Sanyasi has developed this holistic, all-inclusive and equanimous view of creation, he has no right to be truly called a Parivrajak!]

He should pronounce the words ‘Brahm Twam Yagyastwam’ (‘Brahm you are personified in the form of the sacred fire of the sacrifice’) and remember Brahm with full devotion and submission. Then he should enter ‘Savitri’<sup>1</sup>. [That is, he should offer his oblations to fire, water and earth because they represent the Savitri as described in the note below. Or in case he wishes to leave his mortal body and obtain permanent Moksha (salvation and emancipation) as mentioned in the concluding stanzas of verse no. 2 above, he can enter the fire for self-cremation, the water for self-drowning, and the earth for burying himself in a dug-out or enter a cave never to come out again.]

{The following narrative outlines the reverse process of creation, or its regression in metaphysical terms<sup>2</sup>—} The aspiring Parivrajak should first think that the Mother of the Vedas and the one who has supported and sustained the Brahmins since the beginning of creation (i.e. the Gayatri Mantra and the Gayatri Chanda in which the Vedas were originally composed) has reverted back to its original, its principal primary and elementary form as the three Vyahritis. [These three ‘Vyahritis’ are the first words uttered by the creator, and they are ‘Bhu’, ‘Bhuvaha’ and ‘Swaha’. It is from them that the rest of the world came into being; it is from them that all the alphabets of the language and the three steps of the Gayatri Chanda came into existence. The Gayatri Chanda is a special type of verse in which the first verses of the Vedas were composed. Hence it is called the ‘Mother of the Vedas’. Since the Brahmin class used to exclusively study the Vedas and depended upon this study for their knowledge, sustenance and livelihood, it is said that the Gayatri supported them.]

Then the three Vyahritis should be merged with their primary forms as the three letters of the ethereal word OM (i.e. the letters A, U and M respectively). [That is, since Bhu is imagined as having its origin in the first letter ‘A’ of the word OM, it reverts back to it. Similarly, since Bhuvaha is imagined as having its origin in the second letter ‘U’ of the word OM, it reverts back to it. And finally, since Swaha is imagined as having its origin in the third letter ‘M’ of the word OM, it reverts back to it. Not only this, all these three letters A, U and M have no separate existence but in a composite form known as OM which is regarded as a ‘monosyllable’ implying that its sound is just like a single alphabet. In other words, the entire world is deemed to have had its origin in one point source known as the ‘Bindu’ or Brahm, and had expanded from it in its present form. So when regression takes place, it collapses back into this single point source known as Brahm.]

After that, the aspirant should carefully sip some water.

Then, while saying the Pranav Mantra ‘OM’, he should clip-off the tuft of hair (called the ‘Shikha’) from his head, tear the sacred thread (called the ‘Yagyapavit’) that is worn by him across his chest, and remove his clothes and lay them on the ground or throw them in the water of a river etc.

Having discarded all his possessions, he should say the Mantras ‘OM Bhu Swaha’, ‘OM Bhuvaha Swaha’, and ‘OM Swah Swaha’, and meditate upon his form that is like a new-born child. [That is, he should transform himself into a new-born child that has no hair on its head, wears no clothes, has no sacred thread yet, and is naked. This child is absolutely innocent and untainted by the corruptions of the world. Its heart is pure and pristine, and it remembers nothing of the past life nor bothers of the future. It is unconcerned by what is happening around it. It is fearless and careless. It is cheerful, happy and easy to please. The implication is that the Sanyasi should

transform himself into an innocent and pure being that resembles a new-born infant or a very young child. The word 'new-born' aptly applies to him because he has just stepped in to the divine world of spiritualism after having discarded his past life.]

Then he should say 'I have taken Sanyas' three times, first mentally, then in a mutter, and then loudly. This is done to express his firm resolve to become a Parivrajak, to mentally prepare him for the new way of life, to express his intentions and then finally declare it loudly with certainty in his voice.

Then he should henceforth use the OM Mantra and always remember (i.e. keep his mind focused on) Pranav or the supreme transcendental Brahm. He should raise his arms and declare that he is granting fearlessness to all the creatures. No living being need fear him any longer. [This serves a dual purpose—it removes any trace of ill-will or animosity that anyone harbours against him, and it endears him to one and all around him. After all, when he has renounced the world, there is no reason why anyone should have any fear from him. Even if he was a king before taking to the Sanyas way of life, by making this declaration he expects that he is treated like an ordinary man by others. This is necessary in order to instill humility in him along with removal of any trace of ego and pride from his psyche.]

Then he should make the following declarations which encapsulate the great sayings, called the Maha Vakyas, of the Vedas—viz. 'Aham Brahmasmi' (I am Brahm), 'Tattwamasi' (You are that essence known as Brahm) etc. He should constantly meditate and contemplate upon these Maha Vakyas and research the Truth about himself. [That is, he must ponder deeply into the hidden meaning of the great tenets of the scriptures and strive to personally witness and experience the application of the truth of the Maha Vakyas. This can be achieved by concentrating upon his inner-self to realise the Atma or the pure consciousness that resides in his bosom.]

While so lost in his thoughts and full of contentedness and bliss, he should head in the north direction<sup>3</sup> and spend his time wandering there. [That is, after taking Sanyas, he must go to the lofty Himalayan Mountains in search for spiritual solitude and peace, for an environment that is conducive to meditation and contemplation, and for being close to Mother Nature where he can feel the divinity close to him without any sort of disturbance from this world. The phrase 'head north' has a metaphoric meaning also which implies moving up in the direction of spiritual elevation, moving ahead to find liberation and deliverance by breaking free from the shackles of the gross world and entering the subtle world of the Atma, and to move away from the world of material entrapments and delusions into the world of spiritual freedom and bliss.] (3).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>*Savitri*—The word 'Savitri' has a female connotation and is regarded in metaphysics as a personified form of the dynamism and energy of Brahm, the supreme transcendental Being who is the Grand Lord of creation. Its male counterpart is known as 'Savita'. Upanishads assign various interpretations to the word Savitri because the dynamism of Brahm has shown its self in myriad of forms.

In the chronology of genesis of creation it is said that from Brahm came into being the air or wind element, from the wind came into being the ethereal word OM, from the word OM came into being the Savitri (fire), from the Savitri came into being the Gayatri (Mantra of three steps), and from the Gayatri came into being the world (refer Atharva Shir Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, verse no. 6).

The Savitri Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition says that if the Sun is the Savita, then its rays is Savitri (i.e. if the Sun represents the supreme Brahm, then the dynamism of Brahm is personified as its rays called Savitri—refer verse no. 6); if the Fire is Savita (Brahm), then the Prithivi or Earth is the Savitri (its dynamic ability to foster and sustain life on display—refer verse no. 1); if the Water God known as

Varun is Savita (Brahm), then Apaha (the water element in a liquid form) is its Savitri (dynamic form—refer verse no. 2).

In Puranic lore, Savitri is the divine consort of the Sun God. It represents the dynamism and energy of the Sun on vivid display. It is the Fire God personified in the form of a Goddess because the Shakti, or the dynamism of the Supreme Being with which he created, sustains and would bring this creation to an end is represented in a female form of a Goddess known as Shakti. Brahm, the Supreme Being, uses his Shakti to achieve anything in this creation.

Similarly, the Water God who personifies the water element is also known as Savitri as water is regarded as a personified form of all the Gods at once. This is obviously because water is a pre-requisite for life and no life is ever imaginable without the presence of water in some form. It is the great elixir of life. This fact is endorsed by Param Hans Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, verse no. 2 wherein it is stated that when an aspirant is taking the vows of Sanyas and fire is not available due to some reason then he can offer his oblations to the water which is deemed to be the element from which all other Gods have come into being.

The Earth is also known as Savitri as it the base that supports and gives abode to both the fire as well as the water elements. It is in the bowls of the earth that the fire and water live eternally.

If fact it is the Savitri that is regarded as the cosmic Mother from whom all the Gods were born. Refer *Savitri Upanishad*, verse no. 14.

An entire Upanishad is dedicated to the theme of ‘Savitri’ and it is named after this entity as Savitri Upanishad; it belongs to the Sam Veda tradition. Its verse nos. 1-9 are dedicated to defining what is Savitri and what is Savita, and verse nos. 10-13 asserts that the three steps of the famous Gayatri Mantra are actually metaphoric representations of the great Shakti (dynamism, strength, powers, potentials and energy) of the Savitri.

Savitri symbolizes the Shakti of the Supreme Being with special relation to this gross world where the creature lives, i.e. the earth. Hence, when we talk of the fire element and water element as manifestations of Savitri we refer to their forms as they exist on earth—as the subterranean water or fire inherent to earth. No life is sustainable without either of the fire, the water or the earth being present simultaneously.

In the Upanishads dealing with the concept of Sanyas it is prescribed that after the aspirant has duly worshipped the consecrated fire, either actually or in a symbolic manner, he should establish the divine Goddess Savitri in the Vyahritis. Refer *Naradparivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 37.

<sup>2</sup>The *retrogression/conclusion of creation, or the various stages in the dooms-day* have been described in the Vishnu Puran, Chapter 6, Cantos 3-4. In the Upanishads, it has been outlined in the following Upanishads—(i) Shukla Yajur Veda = Paingal Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 6. (ii) Atharva Veda = Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 3, paragraphs 7-16 while describing the life spans of Brahma, Vishnu, Viraat and Adi-Narayan.

<sup>3</sup>The concept of going to the *north direction* to seek spiritual elevation and find Mukti (liberation and deliverance) has been explained in other Upanishads also—viz. Atharva Veda’s *Narad Parivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 37, and *Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15.

In the context of the Indian sub-continent where the Upanishads were first conceived and composed, going in the ‘northern’ direction refers to heading for the lofty heights of the Himalayan mountain range. It is here that great ascetics, sages, seers, hermits and mendicants used to live in early times. It has a dense population of enlightened and self-realised souls. This factor injected an aura of divinity and positivity to the northern direction. Further, the northern direction where the mountains and verdant pristine forests were located had the quality of being tranquil, lonely, serene, calm and peaceful that was very helpful for spiritual pursuits, such as

doing Tapa (austerity and penance), Dhyan (contemplation) and Yoga (meditation). This is the reason why the green, cool and pleasant surroundings of the mountains and their forests were chosen by ancient sages and ascetics as their preferred habitat. This place was far away from the hustle and bustle and the restlessness of ordinary mundane life of the world, and was untouched by corruptions and worldly taints. It gave these holy people absolute peace and quietude that is so necessary for spiritual pursuit, mental peace and emotional solace.

The term 'northern' therefore symbolically represented the upward mobility of the soul when it sought to rise above the humdrum of worldly life, break free from all worldly shackles and entanglements, and seek its liberation and deliverance from the gross body as well as the gross world. It represented the quest for higher spiritual way of existence, a life of higher consciousness, awakening, realisation, wisdom, enlightenment etc. It represented a state of existence free from all moral and spiritual encumbrances represented by numerous taints, faults, corruptions and blemishes that are associated with life in this world. It would be a utopian and pristine pure form of enlightened existence much like the crystal clean and pristine environment of the mountains and its forests themselves.

The dimension, the intensity and the density of positive energy emanating from the pure consciousness is more in the northern direction as compared to other directions because of a greater population of self-realised and enlightened sages who lived in this particular region of the earth. The lofty peaks of the mountains are metaphors of high peaks of pure consciousness, or high intensity waves of consciousness that have peaked, and its accompanying high level of spiritual energy and positivity, while the valleys, depressions and gorges present elsewhere on earth symbolise just the opposite—low level of consciousness and its accompanying low level of spiritual energy.

The world below the northern direction, i.e. everywhere else other than the northern direction, is literally like a slum-ghetto in spiritual metaphor—it is riddled with all sorts of factors that tie down the creature to this deluding world and its entanglements; it keeps the soul trapped in shackles; it impedes growth and development; it breeds moral and spiritual corruption and degeneration. Indeed, it is so gross that it needs quite an effort on the part of the aspirant to break free from its fetters and rise above to his final freedom.

We can look at these two directions from another angle. As compared to the northern direction where the high mountains are located, the opposite direction of the south is where the 'ocean' (the great Indian Ocean) is present. Whereas the mountain represents 'high' ground to which a man rushes for his life out of fear of being drowned during floods and deluges, the ocean is the one that does the opposite—it submerges and drowns everything; everything sinks in its fathomless waters. This is a metaphoric way of saying that the northern direction provides the high moral ground for the creature, and moving towards this direction means spiritual progress whereby the soul is lifted from the bowls of low forms of gross life, and endeavours to reach for the higher form of existence symbolized by the lofty peaks of the mountains. On the other hand, the southern direction is a metaphor for a lowly and gross form of existence that virtually drowns the creature in the quagmire of worldly delusions and its attendant problems just like the ocean sinks everything put in it.

The southern direction is a metaphor for spiritual downfall, degradation, degeneration and depletion of spiritual energy. The low-bound soul gets stuck in this marsh, gets dirty and corrupted, and thereby loses the pristine cleanliness and shine that it inherently possesses. The southern direction representing the gross and deluding world is entrapping for the soul, it's an impediment for the soul's liberation and deliverance, while the northern direction where high land and mountains are present represent the state of existence when the soul lives in a high moral ground, free from all taints and blemishes, and is equivalent to the soul's progress towards its ultimate aim of finding liberation and emancipation.

This being so, those enlightened souls who lived in the northern direction were deemed to be like ‘radiant Gods’ because of the high level of energy of the consciousness emanating from them and forming a bright halo around them. As compared to these enlightened souls, those who lived down in the pit of ignorance and delusions that was characteristic of this material world lacked this glow of divine energy, and hence were regarded as ‘dark-complexioned’.

The other two directions, such as the east and the west, are dominated by plains and comparatively flat land in nature as compared to the mountains in the north and the ocean in the south. So they were represented by those who were ordinary humans, neither as brilliant as the ones who lived in the northern direction, nor as dark as the ones who lived in the southern direction.]

तदधिकारी न भवेद्यदि गृहस्थप्रार्थनापूर्वकमभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते सखा मा गोपायौजःसखा  
योऽसीन्द्रस्य वज्रोऽसि वार्त्रघ्नः शर्म मे भव यत्पापं तन्निवारयेत्यनेन मन्त्रेण प्रणवपूर्वकं सलक्षणं वैणवं  
दण्डं कटिसूत्रं कौपीनं कमण्डलुं विवर्णवस्त्रमेकं परिगृह्य सद्विमुपगम्य नत्वा गुरुमुखात्तत्त्वमसीति  
महावाक्यं प्रणवपूर्वकमुपलभ्याथ जीर्णवल्कलाजिनं धृत्वाथ जलावतरणमूर्ध्वगमनमेकभिक्षां परित्यज्य  
त्रिकालस्नानमाचरन्वेदान्तश्रवणपूर्वकं प्रणवानुष्ठानं कुर्वन्ब्रह्ममार्गे सम्यक्संपन्नः स्वाभिमतमात्मनि  
गोपयित्वा निर्मोऽध्यात्मनिष्ठः कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यदम्भदर्पाहंकारासूयागर्वेच्छाद्वेषहर्षा  
मर्षममत्वादींश्च हित्वा ज्ञानवैराग्ययुक्तो वित्तस्त्रीपराङ्मुखः शुद्धमानसः सर्वोपनिषदर्थमा लोच्य  
ब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाहिंसासत्यं यत्नेन रक्षञ्जितेन्द्रियो बहिरन्तः स्नेहवर्जितः शरीरसंधारणार्थं चतुर्षु  
वर्णेष्वभिशास्तपतितवर्जितेषु पशुद्रोही भैक्षमाणो ब्रह्मभूयाय भवति ॥ ४ ॥

tadadhiḥkāri na bhavedyadi gr̥hasthaprārthanāpūrvakamabhayaṃ  
sarvabhūtebhyo mattaḥ sarvaṃ pravartate sakhā mā gopāyaujaḥ sakhā  
yo’sīndrasya vajro’si vārtraghnaḥ śarma me bhava yatpāpaṃ  
tannivārayetyanena mantreṇa praṇavapūrvakaṃ salakṣaṇaṃ vaiṇavaṃ  
daṇḍaṃ kaṭisūtraṃ kaupīnaṃ kamaṇḍaluṃ vivarṇavastramekaṃ parigr̥hya  
sadgurumupagamya natvā gurumukhāttattvamasīti mahāvākyam  
praṇavapūrvakamupalabhyātha jīrṇavalkalājinaṃ dhṛtvātha  
jalāvataṛaṇamūrdhvagamanamekabhikṣāṃ parityajya  
trikālasnānamācaranvedāntaśravaṇapūrvakaṃ praṇavānuṣṭhānaṃ  
kurvanbrahmamārge samyaksampannaḥ svābhimatamātmani gopayitvā  
nirmamo’dhyātmaniṣṭhaḥ kāmakrodhalobhamohamadamātsaryadambha-  
darpāhñkāṛāsūyāgarvecchādveśaḥarṣāmarṣamamatvādīṃśca  
hitvā jñānavairāgyayukto vittastriparāṇmukhaḥ śuddhamānasah  
sarvopaniṣadarthamālocya brahmacaryāparigrahāhimsāsātyaṃ yatnena  
rakṣaṇjītenḍriyo bahirantaḥ snehavarjitaḥ śārīrasaṃdhāraṇārthaṃ  
caturīṣu varṇeṣvabhiśastapatitavarjiteṣu paśuradrohī bhaikṣamāṇo  
brahmabhūyāya bhavati // 4 //

4. If one is not eligible or unable to take the vows of Sanyas in the format described above (in verse no. 3), then there is an alternative arrangement for him. It is being narrated now.

He should grant fearlessness to all the creatures by declaring—‘OM salutations! Oh friends! Give me your protection; lend me your strength. You are like the weapon called Vajra that belongs to Indra, the king of Gods who had killed the demon Vrittasur with it. Grant me peace and serenity. Free me from sins.’

After having made the above request prefixed with the word OM\*, he should pick up the external signs of a Sanyasi, such as a monk's stick made up of bamboo that is clean and not damaged in anyway (such as being eaten by insects), the waist-thread, the loin-cloth, the water-pot, and one piece of ochre cloth to wrap around the body. [\*The intention of prefixing OM to the address made to friends implies that the aspiring Parivrajak is addressing them as visible manifestations of the supreme Brahm. This word 'OM' is prefixed to all prayers offered to all the Gods as a matter of routine but the intention is that these Gods are being honoured as Brahm in their form, or that the main supreme deity to whom a particular prayer is offered is Brahm and not the junior God who is mentioned by name in the prayer. The same principle applies here as well. After all, it is the same Atma or pure consciousness that resides in the bosom of all the friends of the Sanyasi to whom he addresses this prayer, and this Atma is none but Brahm personified. Hence, he is actually praying to Brahm through the medium of his friends and compatriots.]

Wearing them, he should approach a learned Guru (moral preceptor and teacher) to be formally initiated. He should bow before him in reverence and accept the Maha-Vakya (i.e. the great saying of the Vedas) 'Tattwamasi' ('that art thou'; i.e. the Brahm you are seeking is none but you; the essence of creation is you) as a Mantra from the Guru. [At the time of initiation into a religious fold, the Guru gives a certain Mantra to the disciple as a key to his success. Since the candidate in this case is about to take the vows of Sanyas, the best Mantra is Tattwamasi because it enlightens him about the truth of his own self.]

Once again, this Mantra is prefixed with the divine word OM (to indicate that the teacher is addressing the supreme Brahm when he makes this declaration, and to establish its trustworthiness).

Then the aspiring Sanyasi should observe the following codes of conduct—he should wear only thin ochre clothes or a deer-skin, should avoid getting into water (such as river or a stream) or climbing heights (such as rocks or high mountains), should not take food even by begging from one house more than once (or should accept a little food from a few houses), take a bath three times a day (at dawn, at noon and at dusk), should spend time in studying and understanding the philosophy of the Vedas (i.e. should study the Upanishads in-depth), and constantly repeat the Mantra for Pranav (Brahm), which is OM.

Enlightening himself by acquiring comprehensive spiritual knowledge (got by diligent study of the Upanishads) and treading wisely on the path of Brahm-realisation, he should turn inwards and hide his emotions and feelings within. He should strive to become free from all attachments and affections of all sorts, and instead focus his attention on the Atma, the pure consciousness, by becoming spiritually oriented.

He should abandon the following negative traits—Kaam (worldly passions and lust), Krodh (anger, wrathfulness), Lobh (greed, rapacity), Moha (affections, infatuations, attachments and attractions), Mada (arrogance, hypocrisy, haughtiness), Matsarya (jealously and envy that lead to anger and wrath), Dambha (deceit and conceit, falsehood and lies), Darpa and Ahankar (pride, arrogance, conceit, rashness, boastfulness, false sense of grandiose), Asuya (malice, envy, jealousy, detraction), Garva (same as Ahankar and Darpa), Ichha (aspirations, desires and wants), Dwesh (having animosity, ill-will, jealousy, hatred and malice), Harsha (having joys, feeling happy and exhilarated as from some good news), Amarsh (intolerance and its attendant anger, wrathfulness and jealousy), Mamatwa (to have affections and

endearment for anything or anyone; to be emotionally attached with something or someone), and other such worldly traits that are ensnaring by their inherent nature.

Instead of the above negative traits he should inculcate the following positive ones—He should arm himself with the eclectic virtues of Gyan (truthful knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) and Vairagya (renunciation, detachment and dispassion), should turn his back to material wealth and lust for sensual pleasures, should study all the Upanishads comprehensively with an open and receptive mind, should strictly follow the tenets of Brahmacharya (sexual abstinence as well as exemplary self-control over the sense organs to inculcate discipline), Aparigraha (giving away of assets or possessions; non-accumulation; renunciation of the highest degree), Ahinsa (non-violence, both physical as well as mental), Satya (truthfulness in a holistic way), and Jitendriya (one who has conquered the wayward tendency, the restlessness and rashness of the sense organs of the body; one who exercises exemplary self control over the gross organs of the body).

He should be free from any kind of ‘Raag’ (having any sort of infatuation, attraction, attachment, affection and favour) for anything or anybody or any situation, both internally (i.e. mentally and sub-consciously) as well as externally (i.e. natural tendency of the sense organs to seek self-gratification).

Being thus neutral and non-attached, he should beg for food in order to sustain his gross body by accepting food from any household belonging to any of the four classes of society without distinguishing between them just like an animal (such as cow or other cattle) that accepts food from anyone who offers it something to eat, subject to the condition that this household does not belong to someone who has fallen from his lawful way of life, is sinful and is tainted in any manner. [This is because such food too becomes tainted as it is ill-gotten, and would be like poison for the eater.]

A wise person who follows this principle develops a sense of equanimity and treats everyone as being equivalent to Brahm; he distinguishes between none, as all are Brahm personified in his view (4).

सर्वेषु कालेषु लाभालाभौ समौ कृत्वा करपात्रमाधूकरेणान्नमश्नन्मेदोवृद्धिमकुर्वन्कृशीभूत्वा ब्रह्माहमस्मीति  
भावयन्गुर्वर्थं ग्राममुपेत्य ध्रुवशीलोऽष्टौ मास्येकाकी चरेद्द्वावेवाचरेत् । यदालंबुद्धिर्भवेत्तदा कुटीचको वा  
बहूदको वा हंसो वा परमहंसो वा तत्तन्मन्त्रपूर्वकं कटिसूत्रं कौपीनं दण्डं कमण्डलुं सर्वमप्सु विसृज्याथ  
जातरूपधरश्चरेत् । ग्राम एकरात्रं तीर्थे त्रिरात्रं पत्तने पञ्चरात्रं क्षेत्रे सप्तरात्रमनिकेतः स्थिरमतिरनग्निसेवी  
निर्विकारो नियमानियममुत्सृज्य प्राणसंधारणार्थमयमेव लाभालाभौ समौ कृत्वा गोवृत्त्या  
भैक्षमाचरन्नुदकस्थलकमण्डलुरबाधकरहस्यस्थलवासो न पुनर्लाभालाभरतः शुभाशुभकर्मनिर्मूलनपरः सर्वत्र  
भूतलशयनः क्षौरकर्मपरित्यक्तो मुक्तचातुर्मास्यव्रतनियमः  
शुक्लध्यानपरायणोऽर्थस्त्रीपुरपराङ्मुखोऽनुन्मत्तोऽप्युन्मत्तवदाचरन्नव्यक्तलिङ्गोऽव्यक्ताचारो  
दिवानक्तसमत्वेनास्वप्नः स्वरूपानुसंधानब्रह्मप्रणवध्यानमार्गेणावहितः संन्यासेन देहत्यागं करोति स  
परमहंसपरिव्राजको भवति ॥ ५ ॥

sarveṣu kāleṣu lābhālābhau samau kṛtvā  
parapātramādhūkareṇānnamaśnanmedovṛddhimakurvankṛśībhūtvā  
brahmāhamasmīti bhāvayangurvarthaṃ grāmamupetya dhruvaśīlo’ṣṭau  
māsyekākī caredvāvevācaret /  
yadālambuddhirbhavettadā kuṭīcako vā bahūdako vā haṁso

vā paramahaṃso vā tattanmantrapūrvakaṃ kaṭisūtraṃ kaupīnaṃ  
 daṇḍaṃ kamaṇḍaluṃ sarvamaṃsu visṛjyātha jātārūpadharaścaret /  
 grāma ekarātraṃ tīrthe trirātraṃ pattane pañcarātraṃ kṣetre  
 saptarātramaniketaḥ sthiramatiranagnisevī nirvikāro niyamānīyamamutsṛjya  
 prāṇasaṃdhāraṇārthamayameva lābhālābhau samau kṛtvā govṛttā  
 bhaikṣyamācarannudakasthalakamaṇḍalurabādhakarahasasthalavāso  
 na punarlābhālābharataḥ śubhāśubhakarmanirmūlanaparaḥ sarvatra  
 bhūtalāśyanaḥ kṣaurakarmaparityakto muktacāturmāsyavrataniyamaḥ  
 śukladhyānaparāyaṇo'rthastṛipuraparāṇmukho'nunmatto'pyunmattava-  
 dācarannavyaktaliṅgo'vyaktācāro divānaktasamatvenāsvapnaḥ  
 svarūpānusandhānabrahmapraṇavadhyānamārgenāvahitaḥ saṃnyāsenā  
 dehatyāgaṃ karoti sa paramahaṃsaparivrajako bhavati // 5 //

5. He should treat gains and loses with stoic equanimity in all the planes of time (i.e. in the present as well as in the future; with the past he has no concern).

He should accept food in his palms during begging (instead of in a pot).

He should remain thin and take care not to add flab to the body (as the latter would make him lazy and prone to diseases).

Firmly established in the thoughts of 'I am Brahm' as taught to him by his Guru at the time of getting initiated (refer paragraph no. 4 above), he should roam freely around for a period of eight months. [This period is necessary for his acclimatization to the life of a Sanyasi. It's a buffer zone between his previous life as a householder accustomed to the comforts of the world and the warmth of the household hearth, and the life as a wandering friar who has no such privileges.]

When he has become firmly established in the path of Sanyas and has fully acclimatized himself to its rigours, when he has inculcated wisdom and enlightenment, he should enter the next phases of Sanyas and progressively move ahead by becoming a Kutichak, a Bhaudak, a Hans or a Param Hans in that order<sup>1</sup>.

Having attained the exalted stature of a 'Param Hans Sanyasi' (the theme to which this present Upanishad is dedicated), he should discard the waist-thread (or waist-band), the loin-cloth, the staff and the water-pot by offering them to a water body nearby. While doing this he should offer oblations and say Mantras relevant to the occasion.

Having discarded all his external appendages that characterizes him as being a Sanyasi, he should roam freely everywhere like a naked child. [The word 'naked' is a metaphor for having nothing to hide, having no secrets and no remaining unbothered about having to observe the niceties of the formal world. A child is innocent, cheerful, carefree, pure-hearted, bears no ill-will against anyone, is easy to please, and is regarded as an image of God<sup>2</sup>. Hence, when a Sanyasi or Parivrajak becomes one like a child he is deemed to be an image of God.]

During this period of his wanderings, he should stay in a village for only one night, at a pilgrim site for three nights, in a town for five nights, and in any one given area for not more than seven nights.

He should not have any permanent home of his own.

He should be of a steady and firm mind and intellect, not swayed by any emotion or circumstance.

He should not enjoy proximity with fire (even during the winters—to ensure his safety from being burnt unawares as well as to inculcate the habit of observing strict austerity and doing rigorous penance).



He should stay 'Nirvikaar'—i.e. he should not allow any taints and faults or shortcomings to affect or influence him in the least.

He should free himself from the burden of adhering to certain formalities and rules of life by not bothering to worry about them.

He should regard loss and gain equally, and remain emotionless, unaffected, stoic and neutral in both the cases.

He should beg for food like a cow just in order to maintain his Pran in his body. [To eat like a cow means that he calmly accepts whatever is offered to him, and that too directly in his mouth without storing it for further use. He should chew the food properly before allowing it to enter the stomach like the cow chews its cud.]

He should treat all water bodies as the water-pot.

He should stay alone in a serene, secluded and calm place.

He should never pay attention to any kind of benefit or gain as well as harm or loss.

He should sleep on the ground.

He should not shave.

He should free himself from the obligation of having to observe the various religious sacraments such as 'Chaturmaas'—i.e. the requirement that ordains a monk to stay at a given place for a period of four months during one year, usually during the rainy season. [This requirement has been envisaged by the scriptures as a means to give the body of the wandering monk some rest and to prevent him from being exposed to the vagaries of Nature—such as facing the risk of being bitten by insects which proliferate during the rainy season as well as from reptiles such as snakes which come to the surface when their holes are flooded with rain-water, being infected by germs during the dampness of the rainy season, being soaked by rain with the accompanying chance of falling mortally ill with nothing for protection, or even facing the harsh conditions of winter. But a Param Hans Sanyasi is given the freedom to act as he deems fit.]

He should only pay attention to things that are 'Shukla' or bright and illuminated by nature—i.e. things or subjects that are auspicious, righteous and spiritually uplifting.

He should have nothing to do with women, worldly wealth and material things, as well as a city or village.

In spite of being highly wise, self-realised and enlightened, having inculcated exemplary self control, he should nevertheless behave erratically and unpredictably like an ignorant man, like a vagrant, like a lunatic, or like a wayward man who has lost his bearings. He should not divulge his spiritual stature, either in the form of external signs or in the form of special and exclusive behaviour that is holy, pious and divine. [This is to ensure that he is left alone, and no one either bothers or dares to come near him to disturb his meditative and contemplative mood. Should he show off his elevated spiritual stature and mystical powers, people would swamp him in uncontrollable hordes to seek his blessings for their mundane worldly problems, leaving him no time for his spiritual pursuits and disturbing his peace of mind and demeanours.]

Treating day and night alike, he should always remain in a perpetual state of half-sleep and half-awake. [This refers to his mental state of remaining unconcerned with his surroundings and the world at large. 'Half-asleep' refers to his indifference to anything pertaining to the gross world, and 'half-awake' refers to his constant involvement and remaining engrossed in meditation and contemplation. This state is equivalent to the Turiya state of spiritual existence which also corresponds to the state

of consciousness known as Samadhi. This is a state when one is half awake and half asleep in the sense that though he goes about the routine affairs of this world in apparently a normal way, internally he remains aloof and disinterested in anything. This is the higher level of existence when one has realised the super consciousness that makes him immune to and disinterested in anything inferior and sub-standard. This is also called the 'Unmani' or indifferent state of the mind and the sub-conscious.]

Verily, he who remains absorbed in researching the truth about himself as well as about Pranav (Brahm)—that is, an enlightened Sanyasi who remains engrossed in contemplating upon the Atma which is pure consciousness and his 'true self', along with meditating and contemplating upon Brahm which is the cosmic super Consciousness and the universal Absolute Truth of creation—when such an enlightened and self-realised man follows the path of Sanyas, and finally leaves his gross body as a true and realised Sanyasi (or as a true Parivrajak), then he is indeed known and honoured as a 'Param Hans Parivrajak' (5).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>These four types of Sanyasis are described in Sanyas Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition, Canto 2, verse nos. 23-27; and Shatayani Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, verse no. 11.

<sup>2</sup>The fact that a *child* is an image of God is endorsed by the **Holy Bible** as follows—

“1: At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2: And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3: And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5: And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6: But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. [The Holy Bible, New Testament, Gospel of St. Matthews, 18/1-6.]”

“36: And he took a child and set him in the midst of them; and when he (Jesus) had taken him (child) in his arms, he said unto them (the twelve Apostles), 37: Whosoever shall receive one such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him (the Lord God) who sent me. [The Holy Bible, New Testament, Gospel of St. Mark, 9/36-37.]”

भगवन् ब्रह्मप्रणवः कीदृश इति ब्रह्मा पृच्छति । स होवाच नारायणः । ब्रह्मप्रणवः षोडशमात्रात्मकः सोऽवस्थाचतुष्टयगोचरः । जाग्रदवस्थायां जाग्रदादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः स्वप्ने स्वप्नादिचतस्रोऽवस्थाः सुषुप्तौ सुषुप्त्यादिचतस्रोऽवस्थास्तुरीये तुरीयादिचतस्रोऽवस्था भवन्तीति । व्यष्टिजाग्रदवस्थायां विश्वस्य चातुर्विध्यं विश्वविश्वो विश्वतैजसो विश्वप्राज्ञो विश्वतुरीय इति । व्यष्टिस्वप्नावस्थायां तैजसस्य चातुर्विध्यं तैजसविश्वस्तैजसतैजसस्तैजसप्राज्ञस्तैजसतुरीय इति । सुषुप्त्यवस्थायां प्राज्ञस्य चातुर्विध्यं प्राज्ञविश्वः प्राज्ञतैजसः प्राज्ञप्राज्ञः प्राज्ञतुरीय इति । तुरीयावस्थायां तुरीयस्य चातुर्विध्यं तुरीयविश्वस्तुरीयतैजसस्तुरीयप्राज्ञस्तुरीयतुरीय इति । ते क्रमेण षोडशमात्रारूढा अकारे जाग्रद्विषय उकारे जाग्रतैजसो मकारे जाग्रत्प्राज्ञ अर्धमात्रायां जाग्रत्तुरीयो बिन्दौ स्वप्नविश्वो नादे स्वप्नतैजसः कलायां स्वप्नप्राज्ञः कलातीते स्वप्नतुरीयः शान्तौ सुषुप्तविश्वः शान्त्यतीते सुषुप्ततैजस उन्मन्यां सुषुप्तप्राज्ञो मनोन्मन्यां सुषुप्ततुरीयः तुर्यां तुरीयविश्वो मध्यमायां तुरीयतैजसः पश्यन्त्यां तुरीयप्राज्ञः परायां तुरीयतुरीयः । जाग्रन्मात्राचतुष्टयमकारांशं स्वप्नमात्राचतुष्टयमुकारांशं सुषुप्तिमात्राचतुष्टयं मकारांशं

तुरीयमात्राचतुष्टयमर्धमात्रांशम् । अयमेव ब्रह्मप्रणवः । स परमहंसतुरीयातीतावधूतैरुपास्यः । तेनैव ब्रह्म प्रकाशते तेन विदेहमुक्तिः ॥४॥

bhagavan brahmapraṇavaḥ kīḍṛśa iti brahmā prcchati /  
 sa hovāca nārāyaṇaḥ / brahmapraṇavaḥ ṣoḍaśamātrātmakaḥ  
 so'vasthācatuṣṭayacatuṣṭayagocaraḥ /  
 jāgradavasthāyām jāgradādicatastro'vasthāḥ svapne svapnādicatastro'vasthāḥ  
 suṣuptau suṣuptyādicatastro'vasthāsturiye turiyādicatastro'vasthā bhavantīti /  
 vyaṣṭijāgradavasthāyām viśvasya cāturvidhyam viśvaviśvo viśvataijaso  
 viśvaprajño viśvaturīya iti /  
 vyaṣṭisvapnāvasthāyām taijasasya cāturvidhyam  
 taijasaviśvastaijasataijasastaijasaprajñastaijasaturīya iti /  
 suṣuptyavasthāyām prajñasya cāturvidhyam prajñaviśvaḥ prajñataijasah  
 prajñaprajñah prajñaturīya iti/  
 turiyāvasthāyām turiyasya cāturvidhyam  
 turiyaviśvasturiyataijasasturiyaprajñasturiyaturīya iti /  
 te krameṇa ṣoḍaśamātrārūḍhāḥ akāre jāgradviśva ukāre jāgrattaijaso makāre  
 jāgratprajña ardhāmātrāyām jāgratturiyo bindau svapnaviśvo nāde  
 svapnataijasah kalāyām svapnaprajñah kalātīte svapnaturīyah śāntau  
 suṣuptaviśvaḥ śāntyatīte suṣuptataijasa unmanyām suṣuptaprajño  
 manonmanyām suṣuptaturīyah turyām turiyaviśvo madhyamāyām  
 turiyataijasah paśyantyām turiyaprajñah parāyām turiyaturīyah /  
 jāgranmātrācatuṣṭayamakārāmśam svapnamātrācatuṣṭayamukārāmśam  
 suṣuptimātrācatuṣṭayam makārāmśam  
 turiyamātrācatuṣṭayamardhamātrāmśam /  
 ayameva brahmapraṇavaḥ / sa paramahaṃsaturiyātītāvadadhūtairupāsyah /  
 tenaiva brahma prakāśate tena videhamuktiḥ // 6 //

6. [Brahma (the creator) asked once again—] ‘Oh Lord, what is form of ‘Pranav Brahm’ (the cosmic Consciousness)?’

[Lord Adi-Narayan replied—] ‘Pranav Brahm has sixteen Matras or aspects. [These ‘Matras’ of Brahm are also known as ‘Kalaas’ of Brahm.]

There are four states of existence of consciousness, and each of them has four aspects, bringing the total to sixteen.

There are said to be four primary states of existence of consciousness—viz. Jagrat or waking state, Swapna or dreaming state, Sushupta or deep sleep state, and Turiya or post Sushupta state of existence of consciousness<sup>1</sup>. Each of these primary states is further divided into four more subtle sub-classes of existence bearing the same names as the four primary states.

Hence, the first primary state of existence known as ‘Jagrat’ or waking state of consciousness has four subtle secondary states as sub-divisions or sub-classes known as Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya.

Similarly, the second primary state of existence known as ‘Swapna’ or dreaming state of consciousness has four subtle secondary states as sub-divisions or sub-classes known as Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya.

Likewise, the third primary state of existence known as ‘Sushupta’ or deep sleep state of consciousness has four subtle secondary states as sub-divisions or sub-classes known as Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya.

And finally, the fourth primary state of existence known as ‘Turiya’ or trans-Sushupta state of consciousness has four subtle secondary states as sub-divisions or sub-classes known as Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya.

Thus, the first primary state of consciousness known as ‘Jagrat’, when considered on a macro plane or level of existence, produces the vast external ‘Vishwa’ or the gross world of material sense objects. This state in which the consciousness becomes aware of the external world includes four sub-levels, and each exists as a world in its own right. Hence, during the ‘Jagrat’ state we have the following four classes of Vishwa (external visible, gross world) known as ‘Vishwa-Vishwa’, ‘Vishwa-Taijas’, ‘Vishwa-Pragya’, and ‘Vishwa-Turiya’.<sup>2</sup>

The same principle is applied to the other three states.

Therefore, the second primary state of consciousness known as ‘Swapna’, when considered on a macro plane or level of existence, produces the subtle world known as ‘Taijas’ (literally meaning an entity that is glorious, effulgent, radiant and splendid; here referring to the world of dreams which is more splendid, charming, magnificent and fascinating than the real gross world of physical gross existence). This state in which the consciousness becomes aware of the subtle world that is imaginary but appears to be true as it is created by the glorious creative abilities of the mind and the sub-conscious includes four sub-levels, and each exists in its own right. Hence, during the ‘Swapna’ state we have the following four classes of existence of Taijas world—‘Taijas-Vishwa’, ‘Taijas-Taijas’, ‘Taijas-Pragya’, and ‘Taijas-Turiya’.

Similarly, the third primary state of consciousness known as ‘Sushupta’, when considered on a macro plane or level of existence, produces the subtler world known as ‘Pragya’ (literally meaning an entity that is inherently wise, all-knowing, omniscient, enlightened and erudite). In this state the consciousness is free to see its own self because it is freed from the distractions caused to it by constant inputs from the gross organs of the body in relation to the external world and from the mind and its sub-conscious engaged in imagining a fascinating world of dreams. Hence, the consciousness is able to turn peacefully inwards and see the world of its own, and it is therefore called ‘Pragya’ as it is the world of enlightenment, wisdom, knowledge and erudition as opposed to the gross world known as Vishwa of the Jagrat state, and the subtle world known as Taijas of the Swapna state. Now, as in the previous cases, this Pragya also has four categories as follows—‘Pragya-Vishwa’, ‘Pragya-Taijas’, ‘Pragya-Pragya’, and ‘Pragya-Turiya’.

Finally, the fourth primary state of consciousness known as ‘Turiya’, when considered on a macro plane or level of existence, produces the subtlest form in which the consciousness exists, the world known as the transcendental world or Turiya world. It is so-called because it crosses the outer limit of Sushupta in the sense that having reached this state, the consciousness does not have to revert back to the earlier three states of Sushupta, Swapna and Jagrat. It’s virtually a permanent state of bliss and ecstasy when no awareness of any thing in its gross form exists, and the bliss and ecstasy are irreversible. Like the earlier three cases, this state is also sub-divided into four categories as follows—‘Turiya-Vishwa’, ‘Turiya-Taijas’, ‘Turiya-Pragya’, and ‘Turiya-Turiya’.

Since consciousness and all forms of existence are nothing but Brahm, the super-consciousness, in all these forms, it follows that Brahm has sixteen Matras (or forms or aspects).

[Now, this concept of sixteen Matras of existence of consciousness of an ordinary Jiva or living being in this creation is applied to the grand metaphysical concepts of OM as well as the various states in which consciousness exists when an aspirant is engaged in meditation and contemplation. This helps to draw a parallel between them and establish a sense of seamless uniformity in creation. It also establishes the principle of non-duality by proving that it is the same Brahm that exists in all planes of existence, whether gross or subtle, where micro or macro level of creation is taken into consideration.]

The first letter 'A' of the divine word OM<sup>3</sup> standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Jagrat-Vishwa' form of Brahm which is the latter's first aspect. [This refers to the first step of the Jagrat or waking state of existence of consciousness.]

The second letter 'U' of the divine word OM standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Jagrat-Taijas' form of Brahm which is the latter's second aspect. [This refers to the second step of the Jagrat or waking state of existence of consciousness.]

The third letter 'M' of the divine word OM standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Jagrat-Pragya' form of Brahm which is the latter's third aspect. [This refers to the third step of the Jagrat or waking state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Ardha Matra'<sup>4</sup> (half-syllable) of the divine word OM standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Jagrat-Turiya' form of Brahm which is the latter's fourth aspect. [This refers to the fourth and final step of the Jagrat or waking state of existence of consciousness, and precedes the Swapna state.]

The 'Bindu'<sup>5</sup> (the dot; the point-source of creation) of the divine word OM standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Swapna-Vishwa' form of Brahm which is the latter's fifth aspect. [This refers to the first step of the Swapna or dreaming state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Naad'<sup>6</sup> (the cosmic sound of creation; the dish-like sign placed below the dot on the top of a letter to represent the crucible of creation) of the divine word OM standing for Pranav is equivalent to the 'Swapna-Taijas' form of Brahm which is the latter's sixth aspect. [This refers to the second step of the Swapna or dreaming state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Kalaa' (the various forms or aspects of the gross creation when considered in a holistic and comprehensive manner) is equivalent to the 'Swapna-Pragya' form of Brahm which is the latter's seventh aspect. [This refers to the third step of the Swapna or dreaming state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Kalaa-teet' (the various forms or aspects of creation that transcends the known world and pertains to the subtle world) is equivalent to the 'Swapna-Turiya' form of Brahm which is the latter's eighth aspect. [This refers to the fourth and final step of the Swapna or dreaming state of existence of consciousness just prior to the Sushupta state.]

The 'Shanti' (the peace, calmness, serenity and tranquility that is obtained when the consciousness reaches the Sushupta state) is equivalent to the 'Sushupta-Vishwa' form of Brahm which is the latter's ninth aspect. [This refers to the first step of the Sushupta state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Shanti-Ateet' (the peace, calmness, serenity and tranquility that is obtained when the consciousness reaches the higher state of Sushupta) is equivalent to the 'Sushupta-Taijas' form of Brahm which is the latter's tenth aspect. [This refers to the second step of the Sushupta state of existence of consciousness.]

The 'Unmani' (the state of existence in which the mind has lost all interests in the gross world and the gross body; it is usually employed in the context of Yoga—refer Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 7, verse nos. 17) is equivalent to the

‘Sushupta-Pragya’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s eleventh aspect. [This refers to the third step of the Sushupta state of existence of consciousness.]

The ‘Mano-mani’ (the higher state of existence in which the mind has lost all interests in the gross world and the gross body; it is usually employed in the context of Yoga—refer Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 7, verse nos. 10) is equivalent to the ‘Sushupta-Turiya’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s twelfth aspect. [This refers to the fourth and the last step of the Sushupta state of existence of consciousness.]

The ‘Turyaa’ (the first stage of Turiya state of existence that transcends the Sushupta state; the transcendental state of the mind and the sub-conscious; the so-called Vaikhari state in which a self-realised ascetic or hermit exists) is equivalent to the ‘Turiya-Vishwa’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s thirteenth aspect. [This refers to the first step of the transcendental state of existence of consciousness known as Turiya.]

The ‘Madhyamaa’ (the second stage of Turiya state of existence) is equivalent to the ‘Turiya-Taijas’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s fourteenth aspect. [This refers to the second step of the transcendental state of existence of consciousness known as Turiya.]

The ‘Pashyanti’ (the third stage of Turiya state of existence) is equivalent to the ‘Turiya-Pragya’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s fifteenth aspect. [This refers to the third step of the transcendental state of existence of consciousness known as Turiya.]

The ‘Paraa’ (the fourth and the final stage of Turiya state of existence that is the ‘supreme and most exalted’ state; the word ‘paraa’ means one that is supreme, most exalted and transcendental) is equivalent to the ‘Turiya-Turiya’ form of Brahm which is the latter’s sixteenth and final aspect. [This refers to the fourth and the ultimate step of the transcendental state of existence of consciousness known as Turiya.]

[Now, this concept is being explained in the context of OM. If it is deemed that the entire creation is incorporated in the ethereal word OM that is synonymous with Pranav and Brahm, then these sixteen Matras of Brahm vis-à-vis the four states of consciousness as narrated above can be applied to the different aspects of OM as follows—]

The four Matras or aspects in which the Jagrat state exists represents the four fractions of the first letter ‘A’ of the word OM. [These four Matras are ‘Jagrat-Vishwa’, ‘Jagrat-Taijas’, ‘Jagrat-Pragya’ and ‘Jagrat-Turiya’. Hence, the first aspect or Matra of OM represented by its first letter ‘A’ symbolizes these four sub-divisions of the Jagrat or the waking state of consciousness in this creation.]

The four Matras or aspects in which the Swapna state exists represents the four fractions of the second letter ‘U’ of the word OM. [These four Matras are ‘Swapna-Vishwa’, ‘Swapna-Taijas’, ‘Swapna-Pragya’ and ‘Swapna-Turiya’. Hence, the second aspect or Matra of OM represented by its second letter ‘U’ symbolizes these four sub-divisions of the Swapna or the dreaming state of consciousness in this creation.]

The four Matras or aspects in which the Sushupta state exists represents the four fractions of the third letter ‘M’ of the word OM. [These four Matras are ‘Sushupta-Vishwa’, ‘Sushupta-Taijas’, ‘Sushupta-Pragya’ and ‘Sushupta-Turiya’. Hence, the third aspect or Matra of OM represented by its third letter ‘M’ symbolizes

these four sub-divisions of the Sushupta or the deep sleep state of consciousness in this creation.]

And finally, the four Matras or aspects in which the Turiya state exists represents the four fractions of the Ardha Matra of the word OM. [These four Matras are ‘Turiya-Vishwa’, ‘Turiya-Taijas’, ‘Turiya-Pragya’ and ‘Turiya-Turiya’. Hence, the fourth and final aspect or Matra of OM represented by its Ardha Matra symbolizes these four sub-divisions of the Turiya or the transcendental state of consciousness in this creation.]

The ‘Brahm’ that has been described above is known as ‘Pranav’ or cosmic Consciousness that is all-pervading, all-encompassing, all-knowing and the supreme transcendental Authority and the absolute Truth in creation.

It is this supreme transcendental Brahm that is worthy of being worshipped and sought by Param Hans Avadhuts (higher categories of Sanyasis or Parivrajaks) who have reached the transcendental stage of existence.

This transcendental knowledge is able to reveal the secrets and mysteries of Brahm; it virtually ‘illuminates’ Brahm and makes it known or accessible by way of realisation and enlightenment.

It is the way that leads to ‘Videha Mukti’—or the form of spiritual liberation that transcends the level of gross existence and is not limited to just discarding the gross body upon death but actually being separate from the body even while living in it. Of course, the word ‘Videha’ means ‘without the body’—but here it means to live in such a way that the spiritual aspirant is completely unaware of the existence or non-existence of the body. Since he has become exemplarily self-realised and enlightened, he has understood that his ‘true self’ is not the gross body but the Atma which is pure consciousness personified. This Atma, he realises, is different, distinct and independent from the body. [He thus feels no physical pain or discomfort; he feels no thirst or hunger; he has no attractions for the sense objects of the world simply because these are the functions of the body; he has no friends or enemies for they are also limited to the body.] (6).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The *four states of existence* have been described in the following Upanishads amongst others—(a) Shukla Yajur Veda—Brihad Aranyak Upanishad 2/1/16-20, 4/3/9-38; Subalo-panishad, Canto 4 full as well as Canto 9, verse no. 1-7; Paingalo-panishad, 2/11-16; Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, 2/4-2/5; Turiyateet Upanishad. (b) Krishna Yajur Veda tradition—Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 59-64, 72; Canto 4, verse no. 11-20; Brahmo-panishad, verse no. 1, 20-21; Kaivalya Upanishad, verse no. 12-14; Dhyan Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 93/12-93/15; Sarwasaar Upanishad, verse no. 4; Shaarirak Upanishad, verse no. 14; Brahm/Amrit Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 11. (c) Atharva Veda tradition—Mandukya Upanishad, verse nos. 3-7; Atharvashikha Upanishad; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 4-7; Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 1, 24-26; Canto 6, verse no. 4, Canto 8, verse nos. 9-16, 19-20; Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 5-8.

The Atma or the soul which is pure consciousness and true self of the creature has many states of existence according to metaphysics—e.g. the 1<sup>st</sup> state called the waking state or ‘Jagrat’, the 2<sup>nd</sup> state called the dreaming or ‘Swapna’, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> called the deep sleep state of consciousness or ‘Sushupta’. There is a 4<sup>th</sup> state also, and it is called ‘Turiya’, which is obtained as a result of going beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of deep sleep, and it is a permanent state of bliss and felicity in which the conscious Atma usually lives in ordinary people who are said to be self-realised. Beyond this 4<sup>th</sup> state is the Turiyateet, literally the state which is beyond the Turiya state and in which the Atma (pure consciousness) is free from all the encumbrances and characters

displayed by it during the other four states. Therefore, Turiyateet would be the 5<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the Atma, and the higher transcendental state when the spiritual aspirant experiences oneness with Brahm. Whereas the Turiya state is the hallmark of those who are self-realised, the Turiyateet state is the benchmark for those who are Brahm-realised.

To start with the understanding of these different states of existences of the consciousness, we have to begin with the fundamental two states in which the creature lives in this world. These two are the following—(1) the *waking* and (2) the *sleeping* states. For the purposes of analyzing the behaviour and existential states of the creature during these two fundamental stages, they have been classified into three distinct states as follows—the waking state called ‘Jagrat’, the dream state called ‘Swapna’, and the deep sleep state called ‘Sushupta. Beyond these three, there are two transcendental states called Turiya and Turiyateet states of existence of the consciousness in which self-realisation and Brahm-realisation are possible, or which mark the state in which those who are self-realised and Brahm-realised exist. We will now endeavour to analyse all these five states of existence of the conscious Atma in simple terms in brief.

According to the Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 1, verse no. 11, there are three types of world that the Jiva lives in. They pertain to the three states of consciousness in this world. They are Vishwa (the world as the individual creature perceives it in its waking state of consciousness), Taijas (the world as the individual creature perceives it in its dreaming state of consciousness), and Pragya (the world as the individual creature perceives it in its deep sleep state of consciousness).

(a) The 1<sup>st</sup> stage is called waking or *Jagrat*. During this state, a creature’s sense organs that constitute its gross body are active and they receive inputs from the physical material world outside which they in turn transfer to the mind which forms the creature’s subtle body. This mind then filters through the clutter of information, then either orders the organs of action to respond accordingly, or it consults its supervisor, the intellect, for advice. Meanwhile, the mind stores all the information in its data bank for future reference much like the record room of an office. The true self of the creature, the pure conscious Atma, is like the King in whose secretariat the mind and intellect work, and therefore the Atma is the final Authority which takes the final decision and is responsible for all the things done by each of these individual entities. Even as the King cannot absolve himself for the sins committed by his subjects during his rule or plead ignorance of whatever is happening in his kingdom though he is not directly involved in them or in the day to day routine work of the kingdom as he stays in his palace and cannot be practically expected to control each movement in his kingdom, but he is morally responsible for them and cannot deny this responsibility. Similarly, the Atma of the creature is responsible for each and every thing that the creature does though the Atma is limited to its palace-like residence in the heart of the creature. So, the otherwise immaculate Atma is accused of things that body or mind of the creature does because the Atma is at the helm of affairs.

During this Jagrat state, the Atma interacts with the outside world through the medium of the sense organs of the gross body (i.e. the physical body). The sense organs of perception of the body collect information from the external world and pass them over to the mind, which in turn processes them and passes necessary instructions to the organs of action on the one hand, and files data for future reference in its memory bank on the other hand. The mind would also refer to the intellect those things which are not routine in nature. It is the transcendental state of supreme enlightenment and self-realisation.

The Jagrat state is when the consciousness is aware of the external world of material objects, and this is made possible through the medium of the sense organs of perceptions such as the eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin which enables the creature to respectively see, hear, smell, taste and feel this world. The creature’s responses are



carried out with the help of the organs of action such as the hands which receive, the legs that take him to the desired place, the mouth that helps him to speak and eat, the excretory organs that helps it to eliminate waste from the body, and the genitals which helps him to recreate and enjoy the sensual pleasures of the world. These organs are located in the gross body, and since the world is experienced through them, the latter is also deemed to be gross. The coordination of all the perceptions and actions is done by the mind-intellect which is the subtle part of the body.

The first stage of Jagrat or waking state of consciousness has been beautifully described in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 20; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse nos. 16-19, 31, 34-35.

The Jagrat state of consciousness has also been described in the Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 3, verse no 5.

(b) *Swapna* or dreaming state is the 2<sup>nd</sup> state of consciousness when the latter has withdrawn its self from being actively involved in the outside world through the medium of the sense organs of perception and action. But the mind does not sleep and remains active as before, though this activity is at the subtle level of the sub-conscious. Here, the consciousness remains active through the medium of the vital winds, called the various Prans present inside the body, and moves in the different Naadis (tubular ducts in the body, such as the nerves and veins etc.) which keep the mind working. Refer Shukla Yajur Veda's Paingalo-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 12, and Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 18; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse no. 20; Krishna Yajur Veda's Dhyan Bindu Upanishad, verse nos. 58-60; Rig Veda's Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad of Rig Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 19.

This Pran is deemed to be synonymous with the life factors and consciousness in the body as well as with the latent fire element present inside the body which gives the energy, strength and vitality to the body to live and remain active. If it were not for the fire element (Tej) and the wind element (Pran), the consciousness (Atma, the 'self') would have found it difficult to live in the body. In fact, the Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 3 clearly states that the Pran in its manifestation as Agni or fire.

Since no external stimuli is being received from the outside world, the mind begins to replay what is stored in its memory bank and uses its stupendous abilities to imagine and recreate situations and circumstances in an imaginary world of dreams. Since the Atma living in the causal body depends upon the mind living in the subtle body to feel or sense anything pertaining to this world, for all practical purposes therefore the Atma begins to live in this new world of dreams conjured up by the mind and gets as involved in it as it was during the waking state. Since the mind is active here, the man remembers some of his dreams even when he wakes up. So as far as the Atma is concerned, the two states of waking and dreaming means the same—the world exists for it in both these two states.

During the sleeping stage, the Atma sees dreams. This is called *Swapna* state of existence of the consciousness. In metaphysical terms it is called *Supta*. This is the sleeping state of consciousness. Here, the creature is alive because it's Pran or the vital winds move around and remain active in its different Naadis (tubular ducts in the body such as the nerves which number seventy thousand).

The Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 2 very precisely describes what sleep is.

The Pran oscillates between the Jagrat and Supta states of existences (i.e. between the waking state of consciousness and the sleeping state of consciousness) as described in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse no. 16-18, 34-35.

According to Paingalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, verse no. 12, when the creature is in dreaming state of existence, his Prans (vital life-consciousness

represented by the vital winds) moves along the various Naadis (tubular ducts in the body).

The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in Canto 2, verse no. 61, describes how 'dreams' are seen.

(c) Beyond the second state of existence of consciousness is the third eclectic state called the *Sushupta* or deep sleep state. This has been elaborately dealt with in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 19; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse nos. 14-15, 19, 21-30. During this stage the creature does not dream.

The Sushupta or the deep sleep state of consciousness is the 3<sup>rd</sup> state in which the mind has also become defunct, and the Atma has withdrawn itself into the exclusive domain of the causal body and lives in seclusion, disconnected with the external world because of the non-involvement of either the gross body or the subtle body. Here it is surrounded by the space of the subtle sky around the heart, called the Hridya Akash. During this state of existence, the vital winds, called the Pran or 'life' of the creature, keep on moving in the different Naadis (various ducts such as nerves and veins etc.) as during the dreaming state so as to keep the body alive as is evident from the fact that all the subtle and imperceptible functions of the inner organs of the body such as the liver, kidneys, heart, pancreas, digestive organs, lungs etc. continue uninterrupted as before, because if they cease to function the body would die. It is the mind now that has gone in a defunct state. But this phase is temporary and shows the true nature and fundamental characteristic of the Atma, which is blissful and peaceful, contented and fulfilled, not feeling restless and perplexed in any manner whatsoever because it is now not being disturbed by the mind's constant nagging. That is why a sound asleep man does not want anything, he does not feel anything, he is not worried about anything, he is not concerned about anything, and he does not remember anything. That is also why one feels very relaxed and refreshed after even a short deep sleep when the mind and the body both find their rest.

The Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, in its Canto 4, verse no. 6 describes in clear terms why a creature stops dreaming.

(d) Then comes the 4<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the Atma, and it is known as *Turiya* state. This state is reached when the third state becomes a perpetual phenomenon instead of being only a temporary phase. Once this state of Turiya is reached, then even though the man might wake up from sleep and appears to be going about his normal duties in a routine manner in this world, his pure consciousness remains aloof and distanced from the sense organs of perception and actions as well as from the mind. This is the 'transcendental state' of existence of consciousness, and it goes beyond the third state of Sushupta or deep sleep state of consciousness. Here the spiritual aspirant lives in a state of perpetual Samadhi. That is, he remains in a constant state of blissfulness and meditation though he lives in this physical world and goes about his normal affairs like an ordinary man.

During this 4<sup>th</sup> state called 'Turiya', the Atma acquires all the characters of the earlier three stages, viz. the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleeping states in their individual form as well as in a combined and composite way. In this state of spiritual existence, the consciousness exhibits all the traits of the earlier three states at the same time along with the unique traits which would obviously be a net result of the combined affect of all the individual traits that are so unique to each of the three earlier states of existence consciousness—viz. the waking state, the dreaming state, and the deep sleep state.

The 4<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the consciousness or Atma is also called the 'Turiya Chaitanya state'. In this state, the creature exists in its purest form as the pure consciousness which is undiluted, uninterrupted and unpolluted by any impulses or inputs from the external world. This results in its pristine and immaculate form as 'consciousness' to shine through (much like the flame of the candle which shines

with all its brightness and splendour once the tainted glass covering around it is removed). This consciousness is the true 'self' of the creature and its real identity.

Thus, it is the Atma or the pure consciousness as the true 'self' of the creature that is the witness of the existence of the other three states in which the creature lives. This 'self' or Atma is imperishable and without a birth or beginning. This is because the other three states continue to appear and disappear in a rhythmic cycle as the creature wakes up to face the world after his phase of sleep is over, only to go back to sleep again when it is exhausted, and wake up again refreshed and rejuvenated from sleep. But the fourth state is like the Sun in the sky which is steady and shines constantly upon the world and lights it up. This Sun is unaffected by anything happening in this world and to this world, and remains completely dispassionate and detached from anything mundane and terrestrial. Nights and days appear and disappear in a cyclic manner, but the Sun remains the same. During the night it is erroneously assumed that the Sun is no more, but as science has proved the Sun is there in the sky though it might not be visible to the creature during that period of time called the 'night' as it is shining on the outer side of the globe. The day is comparable to the waking state of consciousness, the moon-light night to the dreaming state of consciousness when a man is able to see this world but with a different light, while the dark night when nothing is visible is comparable to the deep sleep state of consciousness when nothing of the external world is visible.

The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 2, verse no. 64, describes what the practical implication of this Turiya state of consciousness is.

The Subalo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 9, verses 1-7 elaborately describes the fourth state of existence of the consciousness called the Turiya state. It says that the bliss and happiness, collectively called 'Anand', which is found in the 4<sup>th</sup> state of existence of the consciousness called 'Turiya' when one experiences and witnesses the divine supreme transcendental Being (Brahm), also ends with Turiya. It is the 'final frontier', the ultimate goal that the soul strives to reach. So, when the fount of bliss (Anand) is reached in the Turiya state, nothing more is left to be achieved or acquired. As soon as a man abandons this supreme state of existence and wakes up into this mundane existential material world, he immediately loses that bliss which he was enjoying in the Turiya state. The word Turiya means 'fourth quarter', and once this segment is reached after crossing the first three quarters, there is nothing beyond it and the complete cycle is achieved. There is accomplishment of all that has to be accomplished; there is the 'final coming home, full cycle' for the soul. Everything comes to a full stop.

Being thus enlightened about the truth, the man moves ahead to the next phase called 'Turiya' state of existence. In this state, there is no fear of death, no sorrows, no torments, no sufferings and no perplexities pertaining to this world. It is marked by eternal bliss, peace, tranquility and happiness. In this state the man realises his truthful form, and thus all the causes for his taking birth are rendered null and void. That is, the seed in the form of his unfilled desires and hopes as well as the consequences of his past deeds is made sterile. The 'seed' does not find compatible ground to survive and sprout into new shoots. Therefore, the 'tree' in the form of this world and representing the endless cycle of 'tree-seed-tree' symbolizing birth and death is uprooted from its roots for ever.

This final quarter or state of existence called Turiya is marked by glorious virtues, such as of being equivalent to Amrit (the ambrosia of eternity and bliss), of being fearless, of being without any sufferings, pains, sorrows, torments, anguish, grief and distress of any kind, of being eternal, infinite and without an end and limitations, and of being in a state that has no 'seed' or cause from which a person would have to take any birth again. Such a person is called 'Turiya', i.e. one who has crossed the barrier, one who has traveled full circle and has attained final liberation and deliverance. Hence, he attains the supreme transcendental Brahm. [In other words, as has been said above, he comes home after having traveled full circle, and

therefore has no need to go over it once again in order to find his home where he would ultimately retire and take his final rest!]

<sup>2</sup>This concept can be understood by a simple illustration. Suppose there are four types of bottles marked A, B, C and D. Each type has four bottles, hence we have four bottles of type A, four of B, four of C, and four of D, bringing the total number of bottles to sixteen. Now we are provided with four coloured liquids marked L1, L2, L3 and L4, and are asked to fill the four bottles of each category with each of these four liquids. When the filling is completed and the bottles are lined up and labeled, we will have a total of sixteen filled bottles, grouped in four categories of four bottles in each category as follows—

The 1<sup>st</sup> bottle of type 'A' having liquid 'L1', the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle of type 'A' having liquid 'L2', the 3<sup>rd</sup> bottle of type 'A' having liquid 'L3', and the 4<sup>th</sup> bottle of type 'A' having liquid 'L4'.

Similarly, we fill the other group of bottles as follows—the 1<sup>st</sup> bottle of type 'B' having liquid 'L1', the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle of type 'B' having liquid 'L2', the 3<sup>rd</sup> bottle of type 'B' having liquid 'L3', and the 4<sup>th</sup> bottle of type 'B' having liquid 'L4'.

Next, the bottles of group C are considered. The 1<sup>st</sup> bottle of type 'C' having liquid 'L1', the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle of type 'C' having liquid 'L2', the 3<sup>rd</sup> bottle of type 'C' having liquid 'L3', and the 4<sup>th</sup> bottle of type 'C' having liquid 'L4'.

Finally we have the 1<sup>st</sup> bottle of type 'D' having liquid 'L1', the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle of type 'D' having liquid 'L2', the 3<sup>rd</sup> bottle of type 'D' having liquid 'L3', and the 4<sup>th</sup> bottle of type 'D' having liquid 'L4'.

Thus, we have a total of 16 bottles filled with these liquids.

In this example, suppose the four types of bottles stand for the four states of existence of consciousness—viz. bottle of type 'A' represents Jagrat, bottle of type 'B' represents Swapna, bottle of type 'C' represents Sushupta, and bottle of type 'D' represents Turiya.

Similarly, suppose the four coloured liquids stand for the name assigned to this consciousness in each of these states—viz. liquid of type L1 represents Vishwa, liquid of type L2 represents Taijas, liquid of type L3 represents Pragya, and liquid of type L4 represents Turiya.

Therefore, we will have the following sequence—(i) Category A = 'Jagrat-Vishwa'; 'Jagrat-Tijas'; 'Jagrat-Pragya'; 'Jagrat-Turiya'; (ii) Category B = 'Swapna-Vishwa'; 'Swapna-Tijas'; 'Swapna-Pragya'; 'Swapna-Turiya'; (iii) Category C = 'Sushupta-Vishwa'; 'Sushupta-Tijas'; 'Sushupta-Pragya'; 'Sushupta-Turiya'; and finally (iv) Category D = 'Turiya-Vishwa'; 'Turiya-Tijas'; 'Turiya-Pragya'; 'Turiya-Turiya' = 16 states or aspects of the same consciousness.

An important point to note is that the existence of four sub-divisions in any one state of existence is a system adopted of grading the same consciousness into different subtle levels within the same state. It is like the system of grading students in school or college—those within the general grade 'A' are sub-divided into two or more categories such as A++, A+, A and A—.

<sup>3</sup>The concept of *OM* and *Naad*: Briefly, the monosyllabic word OM actually consists of three letters when analysed—viz. A, U and M. The letter 'A' stands for the origin of creation, the letter 'U' signifies the development and expansion of this creation, while the letter 'M' stands for conclusion. Other metaphysical connotations of these three letters have been elaborately described in Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 74-79 and Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 3-10 of Sam Veda.

<sup>4</sup>The *Ardha Matras*/Maatraas—The Ardha Matras are the half-syllables used in Sanskrit language and placed above, below, before and after an alphabet to give it a proper sound. It gives the concerned alphabet a proper form besides giving a meaning to the word of which the alphabet with its Ardha Matras is a constituent part.

According to the Ram Uttar-Tapini Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 4/40, Lord Ram has been viewed as a personification of this 'Ardha Matras'. It symbolises the fact that without him the creation loses its meaning, glory and existence even as a word loses its meaning and impact without the alphabets having proper Ardha Matras.

In the context of OM, the Ardha Matra refers to a half-syllable placed at the end of the third letter 'M' of OM in the form of a 'Halant' or a mark of an oblique line placed below M. In the symbol of OM, it is represented by a horizontal 'S' sign placed to the right groove of the symbol which represents the long vowel sound of 'Ooo' in Sanskrit (like in *boot*). Normally, the letter 'M' of the word OM is to be hummed in a prolonged sound stretching into infinity. But since it is not done and the worshipper becomes silent, it is called 'half Matra' or half syllable. It is tantamount to conclusion of the word OM, and since OM is envisioned as representing the whole gamut of creation, this Ardha Matra is symbolic of conclusion of creation. That is why it is accompanied by the universal fire of destruction called the Samvartak Agni.

The Atharva-shikha Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Kandika 1 says that the Ardha Matra of OM represents the Moon God, the Mantras of the Atharva Veda, the Maruts (the Wind God), the Viraat Chanda and the Samvartak Agni. It is the fourth leg or Paad of Brahm and follows the third letter 'M' of OM.

The Tripadvibhūt Maha-Narayan Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, Canto 7, paragraph no. 68 says that Lord Vishnu represents the Ardha Matra.

<sup>5-6</sup>The Bindu and Naad—The word 'Bindu' ordinarily refers to a 'dot' placed on the top of a Sanskrit alphabet to produce the nasal sound of a resonating 'N' or of 'M'—as in *ring* or *rim*. It is equivalent to the reverberations of primordial sound created at the beginning of creation, and from which the rest of the subtle forms of sound were generated. It is called Naad in this context of creation.

The Naad and Bindu are collectively called the 'Chandra Bindu'. It is a sign resembling a concave crucible or shallow plate over which is placed a dot at its focal point. It is a 'moon-like spot' and hence called the 'Chandra' (moon) 'Bindu' (a dot). It is a nasal sound equivalent to the letter 'N' as in the words *can't*, *mount*, *taint* or *taunt*. The Moon is regarded as the heavenly pitcher of Amrit, the elixir of life and the ambrosial fluid of eternity and bliss. The Bindu is a drop of this Amrit. Hence, in metaphysics the term Chandra Bindu is used to refer to the supreme transcendental Brahm and the spiritual state of realisation of pure conscious 'self' when the aspirant enjoys bliss and experiences a surge of ecstasy. This is a metaphoric way of saying that he tastes Amrit dripping from the Moon.

The concept of *Bindu* (a 'dot' or a 'drop') and *Naad* (the cosmic 'sound') have a close association with the concept of OM (the ethereal word representing the supreme transcendental Brahm) and its iconographic depiction as a symbol in the form of the sixth alphabet of the Sanskrit language, i.e. the long vowel sound 'Ooo' as in 'boot or root'. Amongst the various Upanishads that describe this concept are Naad Bindu, Dhyān Bindu, Tejo Bindu and Yogshikha (Canto 3, verse nos. 2-11).

This OM is a representative of the supreme transcendental divine entity known as Brahm which predates this existence and lasts even after this world is concluded. In fact, this creation would fall back to merge into this Brahm and re-emerge from it at the time of a new beginning much like waves in an ocean rising and falling into the water again and again. This Brahm is in a neutral, a-dynamic and attributeless state in the period before the process of creation began. Then when the time came for the creation to come forth, energy and necessary strength and relevant power were needed. This is called 'Shakti' aspect of Brahm which was inherent to Brahm but in a latent form. The 'point' whereby this Brahm revealed his Shakti is called a 'Bindu'. It is also like a 'drop' of the cosmic sperm emerging from the cosmic Purush, the invisible Father of creation, which contain all the necessary energy, strength, vigour and vitality needed to initiate the process of creation. Hence, Bindu is Brahm's 'Shakti' aspect; it represents the 'dynamic principle of Brahm'. In Tantra literature,

Brahm is treated as Shiva, and his energy is called a Shakti represented by the Bindu. Since OM is a symbol for Brahm, this Shakti was put on top of this symbol in iconography to depict this fact in visual term.

Now came the revelation of this Shakti—and that was done in the form of Naad, the ‘cosmic sound’. Since only the invisible ether was present in the beginning, this Shakti caused a ripple in it which spread in the form of waves. Waves have kinetic energy and this set in ‘motion’ the process of creation. Modern science has shown that the origin of this universe was in a Big Bang, and this means that there was a ‘single point’ where this ‘explosive bang’ occurred—a clear reference to the concept of a ‘Bindu’ (point) and its accompanying ‘Naad’ (sound). It was from this Bindu that the cosmic debris spread out by the force of this explosion to distant corners of the available space to act as nuclei for the umpteen numbers of planets and star systems that would eventually evolve to form the universe as we know of it today.

Since Bindu was the energy of Brahm that was not visible, it is therefore the un-manifest dynamic force of Brahm and very closely associated with the latter; it is a part of Brahm. The Naad is a revealed form of this Shakti as it is the cosmic sound which can be actually heard. Since Naad had its origin in Brahm and is a manifested form of the stupendous energy contained in an un-manifested form in the Bindu, it is constantly associated with them much like the electromagnetic waves (Naad) of a radio broadcasting station, the speaker (Brahm, the consciousness) who broadcasts the news and the transmitter tower (the Bindu) are inseparable from one another.

The concept of ‘Bindu’ and ‘Naad’ can be understood in another plane also. The cosmic process of creation needed the injection of a cosmic sperm to initiate the process of the creation of the cosmic embryo. This sperm would come from the cosmic Father, i.e. Brahm. Brahm in the context of metaphysical interpretation of creation would be the ‘causal body of the cosmos’ because it is the ‘cause’ of it all. The ‘drop’ of sperm ejaculated by this Father (Brahm) had the stupendous creative power and energy that provided the necessary spark. The word ‘Naad’, in addition to its conventional meaning of ‘sound’, also means a big open concave ‘bowl or dish or crucible’ for storing liquid, which in the context of creation meant the cosmic womb of Nature. So, when the cosmic Father (Brahm) dropped one ‘drop’ of his sperm (Bindu) into the crucible (Naad), the cosmic conception was affected and the process was initiated. From this conception there emerged the Hiranyagarbha, the yellow egg of the cosmos, which in terms of Vedanta would be the macrocosmic ‘subtle body’ of creation. When this cosmic egg matured, the macrocosmic gross body emerged in the form of the Viraat Purush.

The stupendous and astounding powers that Brahm inherently possesses are highlighted in the context of the most fascinating, majestic and magnificently wondrous world it has created using its own energy called Shakti. Had this creation not been in existence, the powers of Brahm would not have come to the fore. In other words, the active principle of Brahm is revealed in the form of the Shakti.

Since the Bindu is regarded as the Shakti principle of Brahm in Tantra literature because it is this principal point from where the primary form of active and dynamic Brahm started to reveal its self in the form of Naad, it is likened to the ‘fire element’. The Naad itself is sound and the latter needs the medium of ether to travel as waves and spread in all the directions. Therefore, Naad is likened to the ‘wind element’.

For the purpose of Yoga practice, the Bindu is depicted as the dot present on the top of the symbol of Naad, i.e. the sixth Sanskrit alphabet ‘Ooo’, symbolising the focal point in the cosmic bowl from where this sound is generated and where the mind is supposed to be focused during meditation so that Naad can be heard. The location of this Bindu in the body is the center of the two eyebrows where a practitioner of Yoga is supposed to focus his attention during meditation.

The Naad is the cosmic sound heard by an ascetic when he is in deep meditation mode. As any sound originates from a source and then radiates out in the form of waves much like ripples created on the surface of a calm lake when a stone is thrown

in it, the Naad has its cosmic origin in the one-point source of sound energy called Bindu that has Brahm as its principal base.

From the perspective of the meaning of Naad as 'sound' we can have the following interpretation—all sounds have a 'point' of origin, the Bindu of origin. From this point source the sound waves spread out in waves in the ether present in space at the macro level of creation, and in the air in the immediate surrounding space at the micro level of creation. It can be compared to ripples arising on the surface of a calm lake when a stone is thrown on it. 'Energy' waves are created from the 'point' of impact and spread out in concentric layers just like the waves of sound travel in ether. This example would prove why and how the origin of Naad was envisioned in the Bindu (dot) by the ancient sage who had first visualised it.

The Bindu means a 'point source', and Naad refers to the 'un-manifest energy in the form of sound' that radiated out in the cosmic ether from this point source. Therefore, the Bindu would refer to the passive Brahm and the Naad would mean in this context the dynamic and active energy of this Brahm radiating out from this point source to all the directions of creation.

This Bindu or dot is the focal point from which the cosmic Naad or sound originated when the process of creation first started in what the modern science recognizes as the 'Big Bang'. This sound spread to all corners of the cosmos. The human skull is also slightly concave from the inner side, and the brain is located just below it. The implication is very obvious—this Bindu or 'dot' generated the cosmic Naad which is heard by the ascetic when he focuses his entire concentration in the head by diverting all his senses away from the external world and fixing their attention on one point in the head, called the Agya Chakra or still higher up in the Brahm Randhra Chakra.

It is just like fine tuning the antenna of the modern satellite discs used in television reception. The reverberation and vibrations caused by this cosmic Naad is very overwhelming for the ascetic and he literally drowns in its sound. The vibrations massage his nerves and relaxes them; he feels a sense of extreme ecstasy and bliss due to this, and that is comparable to the one obtained at the time of ejaculation of sperm during intercourse—hence the reference to the male phallus and the semen dripping from it. There is no vulgarity in this explanation. This citation is used to give a physical and verifiable idea of the extent of bliss and ecstasy obtained when the ascetic reaches the climax of Yoga so that he can hear the Naad.

This is also why this condition is compared to the 'cosmic union' of Shiva representing Brahm and his own energy personified as Shakti which produced this sound energy called Naad in the ethereal space of the cosmos. It was Brahm's ecstasy and bliss of self-realisation that produced a cosmic vibration which in turn set in motion the process of creation. According to Vedanta, Shiva is known as Brahm, while this Shakti is known as Maya. According to the Sankhya philosophy, this Shakti is called Prakriti in the context of Brahm who is called Purush here.

In Tantra worship, Bindu is regarded as Shakti, the dynamic aspect of Shiva, and the Peeth is the seat of this Shakti. There is another way at looking at these two words—Bindu represents the cosmic sperm which represents the dynamic energy, potentials and powers of Shiva, and the Peeth would then be the seat of this Shiva energy, i.e. the base of the Shakti.

Naad is a form of cosmic sound, and this sound is a form of energy created by vibrations in ether. In other words, during the process of Yoga, when the vital winds, especially the Apaana wind is made to activate the Mooladhar Chakra by literally vibrating or shaking it into action, the latent energy trapped inside it is activated to produce the sound much like striking of the tuning fork produces sound in a school physics laboratory.

This is another interesting analogy. The seed is round and small—almost like a Bindu or dot—when compared to the huge tree that it would produce. The sprout is

like a Lingam or phallus coming out of it. [Refer Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 3.]

The Naad or cosmic sound that is physically heard during Yoga is a manifestation of the dynamic forces or Shakti of Brahm, the energy present in this Naad is that dynamic force or Shakti itself. Taking a parallel from the physical world, the Naad is like the eye of the body but the eye function only because it has the energy to do so and has been empowered by the faculty of sight to see. In other words, the ascetic sees this living world characterised by the presence of sound as a revelation of Brahm who is universally and uniformly present throughout it in an imperceptible and subtle form. The fact that 'sound characterizes this world as living as opposite to being dead' is proved by the fact that there is utter silence in a morgue or grave yard whereas there is hustle and bustle of life in a busy city. For all practical purposes of Yoga as described in the Yogshiksha Upanishad, this Naad and its subtle energy called Pashyanti is located in the Mooladhar Chakra. [Refer Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 178, Canto 3, verse nos. 2-3.]

The concept of Naad and Bindu has been explained at length in Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse nos. 105, 167, 178; Canto 2, verse no. 6; Canto 3, verse nos. 2-3, 11; Canto 4, verse no. 47; Canto 5, verse no. 28; and Canto 6, verse nos. 48-49, 71-73.

The relationship between Naad and Bindu has been elucidated in great detail in Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse no. 178, Canto 3, verse nos. 3, 11, and Canto 4, verse no. 47.

The relationship between the Bindu, Naad and the Mana has been described in Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 1, verse no. 178, Canto 6, verse nos. 71-73.

*Naad Shakti* or the majestic, dynamic and profound mystical and spiritual energy, powers and potentials of Naad have been expounded in Yogshikha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse nos. 105, 178, Canto 6, verse nos. 21, 48, 72.

The *Bindu Shakti* or the majestic mystical energy and spiritual potentials of the point-source from where the cosmic Naad is envisioned to have had its origin has been described in Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 49, 71, 73.]

भगवन् कथमयज्ञोपवीत्यशिखी सर्वकर्मपरित्यक्त कथं ब्रह्मनिष्ठापरः कथं ब्राह्मण इति ब्रह्मा पृच्छति ।  
स होवाच विष्णुर्भो भोऽर्भक यस्यास्त्यद्वैतमात्मज्ञानं तदेव यज्ञोपवीतम् । तस्य ध्याननिष्ठैव शिखा ।  
तत्कर्म स पवित्रम् । स सर्वकर्मकृत् । स ब्राह्मणः । स ब्रह्मनिष्ठापरः । स देवः । स ऋषिः । स  
तपस्वी । स श्रेष्ठः । स एव सर्वज्येष्ठः । स एव जददुरुः । स एवाहं विद्धि । लोके  
परमहंसपरिव्राजको दुर्लभतरो यद्येकोऽस्ति । स एवं नित्यपूतः । स एव वेदपुरुषो महापुरुषो यस्तच्चिंतं  
मय्येवावतिष्ठते । अहं च तस्मिन्नेवावस्थितः । स एव नित्यतृप्तः । स  
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखमानावमानवर्जितः । स निन्दामर्षसहिष्णुः । स षडूर्मिवर्जितः । षड्भावविकारशून्यः ।  
स ज्येष्ठाज्येष्ठव्यवधानरहितः । स स्वव्यतिरेकेण नान्यद्रष्टा । आशाम्बरो नमस्कारो नस्वाहाकारो  
नस्वधाकारश्च नविसर्जनपरो निन्दास्तुतिव्यतिरिक्तो नमन्त्रतन्त्रोपासको देवान्तरध्यानशून्यो  
लक्ष्यालक्ष्यनिवर्तकः सर्वोपरतः स सच्चिदानन्दाद्वयचिद्धनः सम्पूर्णानन्दैकबोधो ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीत्यनवरतं  
ब्रह्मप्रणवानुसंधानेन यः कृतकृत्यो भवति स ह परमहंसपरिव्राडित्युपनिषत् ॥५॥

॥ इति परमहंसपरिव्राजकोपनिषद् ॥



bhagavan kathamayajñopavītyāśikhī sarvakarmaparityaktaḥ katham  
 brahmaniṣṭhāparaḥ katham brāhmaṇa iti brahmā prcchati /  
 sa hovāca viṣṇurbho bho'rbhaka yasyāstyadvaitamātmajñānam  
 tadeva yajñopavītam / tasya dhyananiṣṭhaiva śikhā / tat karma sa pavitram /  
 sa sarvakarmakṛt / sa brāhmaṇaḥ / sa brahmaniṣṭhāparaḥ / sa devaḥ /  
 sa ṛṣiḥ / sa tapasvī / sa śreṣṭhaḥ / sa eva sarvajyeṣṭhaḥ / sa eva jagadguruḥ /  
 sa evāhaṁ viddhi / loke paramahaṁsaparivrājako durlabhataro yadyeko'sti /  
 sa eva nityapūtaḥ / sa eva vedapurūṣo mahāpurūṣo yastaccittam  
 mayyevāvatīṣṭhate / ahaṁ ca tasminnevāvasthitaḥ / sa eva nityatrīptaḥ /  
 sa śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhamānāvamānavarjitaḥ / sa nindāmarṣasahiṣṇuḥ /  
 sa ṣaḍūrmivarjitaḥ / ṣaḍbhāvavikāraśūnyaḥ /  
 sa jyeṣṭhājyeṣṭhavyavadhānarahitaḥ / sa svavyatirekeṇa nānyadraṣṭā /  
 āśāṁbaro nanamaskāro nasvāhākāro nasvadhākāraśca navisarjanaparo  
 nindāstutivyatirikto namantratantropāsako devāntaradhyānaśūnyo  
 lakṣyālakṣyanivartakaḥ sarvoparataḥ sa saccidānandādvayacidhdhanah  
 saṁpūrṇānandaikabodho brahmaivāhamasmīyanavarataṁ  
 brahmapraṇavānusaṁdhānena yaḥ kṛtakṛtyo bhavati sa ha  
 paramahaṁsaparivrāḍityupaniṣat // 7 //

7. Brahma asked once again—‘Oh Lord! How can one be called a ‘Brahmin’ if he follows the edicts of Sanyas and discards the sacred thread, cuts off the tuft of hair on the head, and abandons doing any of the religious deeds such as a fire sacrifice and observing other sacraments as required by the scriptures to be done by a Brahmin?’

Lord Vishnu (Adi-Narayan) replied—‘A true Brahmin is a wise and enlightened person who treats the Atma, the pure consciousness, as the non-dual Principal of creation (i.e. who regards the Atma as a personification of the supreme Brahm that is non-dual or Advaita and the only supreme Authority of creation), and for whom being steady in his meditation and contemplation as well as spiritual pursuit is the symbolic tuft of hair—such a person is deemed to be cleansed and made holy by whatever he does. This is because all his deeds are deemed to be auspicious and holy. [That is, he need not do special deeds such as fire sacrifices or observing of sacraments in order to wash off his sins or any kind of spiritual taints that might be adhering to him.]

He is deemed to have completed doing all religious and auspicious deeds required to be done by a man.

It must be understood that such an enlightened man is indeed a Brahmin for he is dedicated and devoted to Brahm (the Supreme Being), he is no less than a God, he is indeed a ‘Rishi’ (or a great sage), he is a ‘Tapasvi’ (or someone who is well endowed with the glorious virtues of Tapa, i.e. austerity and penance, and is steadfast in observing its tenets), he is the best follower of the tenets of the scriptures and an excellent spiritual aspirant, he is therefore the Guru (guide, teacher and preceptor) for the whole world.

A truly wise, enlightened and self-realised aspirant who understands the implications and import of what has been said above realises the truth of the statement that the pure conscious Atma standing for Brahm is the true identity of his. And therefore such an enlightened man declares ‘It (Brahm; Atma; Truth; Consciousness) is me’.

True Param Hans Parivrajaks are a rarity in this world. If there is one then surely he is a personification of the Vedas—i.e. he is eternally as holy, pure, auspicious and divine as the Vedas.

I (i.e. Lord Adi-Narayan; Lord Vishnu; the Supreme Being) reside in the inner-self of a great and spiritually enlightened man whose mind and sub-conscious is perpetually focused on me. [That is, those who remain submerged in the thoughts of the Lord, who constantly meditate upon the Lord, who remain engrossed in contemplation upon the Lord, who think of no one else except the Lord, and whose entire life and its purpose is dedicated to the Lord, the Lord lives in their hearts as his own abode. In other words, the heaven that is imagined to be the divine abode of the Supreme Being is no where else except in the heart of the sincere devotees of the Lord. Such people become a living personification of the divine heaven or a pilgrim site because the Lord resides in their inner-self.]

Such a self-realised man in whose heart the Lord resides and who possesses the eclectic virtues mentioned herein above is indeed eternally contented.

He becomes immune to and is freed from being moved or influenced by heat or cold, praises or insults, happiness and joys or pains and sorrows. [This is because he has inculcated the grand qualities of equanimity, fortitude, forbearance, tolerance, dispassion, neutrality and indifference.]

He easily bears with criticism, slander, reproach and censure, as well as with all provocations, instigations and temptations to become angry and wrathful, seeking revenge or retribution. [That is, he is exemplarily forgiving and tolerant; he harbours no ill-will or animosity against anyone.]

He is free from the tainting effects of the six Urmis<sup>1</sup>.

Similarly, he is free from the six Vikaars<sup>2</sup> that taint a man's thoughts.

He sees and treats everyone alike, without distinguishing between any two creatures. [That is, he has developed the holistic view that all the creatures are Brahm personified, that the same divine Atma or pure consciousness lives in all of them, and therefore one should treat all living beings equally with great respect and equanimity. One must not be partisan and biased in anyway; one should not show favour or dis-favour towards anyone; one should regard rich and the poor, the lowly and humble as well as the high and the mighty in equal terms.]<sup>3</sup>

He sees nothing else except the Atma (the universal Consciousness) everywhere.

The directions are his clothes. [That is, he prefers to remain physically naked because he wears the sky as his over-garment.]

He does not believe in formalities and external forms of worship, hence he does not follow the four ritualistic steps of doing a sacrifice—viz. 'Namaskar' or bowing before the sacred fire to pay respects, 'Swaha' to indicate that he does not offer any oblations to the physical form of fire because this word is uttered when one is offering an oblation to the sacred fire, 'Swadha' to indicate that he does believe in offering libations to the spirit of dead ancestors, and 'Visarjan' to indicate that he need not undertake the rituals for formally ending the sacrifice. [This is because he has established the sacred fire in his own inner-self at the time of taking the sacred vows of Sanyas—refer paragraph no. 2 of this Upanishad. He need not worship the spirit of dead ancestors because he has no relations in this world except the Atma, and the Atma does not die so there is no question of offering anything to a 'dead' entity. Besides this, he worships no one else except the supreme Brahm and his Atma.]<sup>3</sup>

He is beyond the purview of reproach, criticism and insult, and is immune to them.

He does not employ any Mantra (spiritual formulas) or Tantra (occult forms of worship) for attainment of his spiritual objectives.

He does not think of or worships any other God or deity.

He is so enigmatic and mystical in his ways that nothing can be known of him in certain and visible terms, nor is anything of him is hidden as his life is absolutely transparent. [Since his ways are mystical and mysterious, nothing can be certainly ascertained about him. And since he remains 'naked', there is nothing of him that is hidden, concealed or secret. The term 'naked' is a metaphor for openness and transparency. Hence, a Parivrajak presents a paradox.]

He remains above all and indifferent to all.

He is steadfast in his conviction that 'I am Brahm', and remains submerged in this eclectic thought.

He is eternally blissful as he remains engrossed and lost in the thoughts of the divine entity (Brahm and Atma) that is hallmarked by the virtues of being truly and eternally blissful ('Sachidanand'), of being non-dual and unique ('Advaitya'), and being a treasury of enlightened consciousness ('Chidghan').

A person who feels fulfilled and absolutely contented by realizing the supreme Brahm, known also as Pranav (and represented by the ethereal word OM), is indeed called a 'Param Hans Parivrajak'.

Verily and in all sooth, this is what this Upanishad elucidates and declares; this is its proclamation and affirmation. Amen! (7).

[Note—<sup>1-2</sup>The *six Urmis* and *six Vikaars* have been described in the Varaha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 8-9 of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition. These are the six faults associated with all those entities that take a birth and have a gross body.

These faults are the following—(i) That there is an 'Asti'—i.e. to be in existence. [This is a major fault because whatever that exists in this world is an illusion created by the mind just like the existence of water seen in a desert mirage, ghost in the dark, a serpent in the rope, change in the moon's surface during the lunar cycle, two or more suns when seen as an image in more than one mirror, the sun or moon being devoured by some imaginary demon during eclipses, the rising or setting of the moon or the sun, etc. There is another interpretation of the term 'existence'—it is the existence of 'duality', the conception that there are two independent entities such as the Jiva or the living creature and the Parmatma or the Supreme Being, or the conception of 'you' and 'me', or 'this' and 'that'. This is against the fundamental tenet of Vedanta which lays stress on 'non-duality' of everything which briefly states that whatever that exists is but one single non-dual Brahm revealed in that form. Therefore, the concept of 'Asti' has an erroneous, a fallacious and ill-conceived foundation. Anything founded on errors of perception or misjudgment is bound to be faulty, distorted, and away from the reality and truth.

(ii) That there is a 'Jaati'—i.e. birth. This relates to the conception that there is a birth and that things are freshly born or reborn again. [This is a fault also because of two reasons. One, if anything does not exist as asserted by the first clause, then the question of its being born or dying does not arise. And two, even if we were to treat everything as Brahm personified—because it would be difficult to deny things physically seen and witnessed—then it is forgotten that Brahm does not take a birth, for it is eternal, infinite, imperishable and the 'one without a birth'. Therefore this very conception of having a birth has no sound footing; it is faulty. It is an upshot of faulty perception of the reality of Brahm and Truth.]

(iii) That there is a 'Vardhan'—i.e. there is increase, enhancement, expansion, growth. This relates to the conception that an entity increases, enhances, grows or develops. [This is a fault because for one, 'truth' never grows and develops, it is always constant, universal, uniform and never changing; and two, 'Brahm' also does

not grow or enhance or develop or in any way change because it is the ultimate Truth in creation, and 'Truth' does not change.]

(iv) That there is a 'Parinaam'—i.e. result or consequence or effect or sequel. This relates to the conception that there is a sequel, a consequence, an affect, an upshot, an outcome, a result, a follow up or a fruit of certain deed that was done in the past. [This arises out of the fundamental error that one is the doer of anything, that therefore there is a consequence, a result or sequel of that deed—either good or bad—which cannot be avoided and must be either enjoyed or suffered. This is a fundamental error of conception because one is not a doer of anything because all deeds are done by the physical body which is not the 'self' of the person, for this 'self' is the pure consciousness called the Atma that lives as a distinct entity inside the body as its resident. Further, since there is no truth in what is seen in this world, the question of there being a birth, development and an end does not arise, and consequentially the question of anything being a Parinaam of any deed done in the past life also does not arise.]

(v) That there is a 'Kshaya/Kchaya'—i.e. decay and decline. This relates to the conception that there is a stage called the last stage when there is decay and decline. [This is an error arising out of the pervious errors because anything that is eternal, infinite, imperishable and truthful, for instance Brahm, never decays or declines, nor does anything that really does not exist, like this illusory world, can ever decay or decline. It is all imaginary, delusory and false.]

(vi) That there is a 'Naash'—i.e. destruction and ruin. This relates to the conception that there is finally destruction or termination. [This fault is a derivative of the earlier faults.].

“verse no. 9 = The six Urmis or faults of the body are the following—(i) 'Ashana' or hunger, the need to eat, and therefore the need for food (along with all the accompanying problems such as worrying about its production, safety, storage, procurement, cooking, proper digestion etc.); (ii) Pipaasa or thirst, and the desire to drink and therefore the need for liquids to quench the thirst (which create the same sort of problems that are associated with the need for food; (iii) Shoka or grief, distress and dismay (which have a profound negative impact on the overall mental, psychological and general metabolic health of the body); (iv) Moha or to have strong attractions or longing for anything or anyone, to be emotionally attached with anything, to be deluded, to be held under magical spell of anything or to be under its charm, to hallucinate as a result of these emotional faults (all of which makes a man a virtual serf of his emotions and tied down to the object of his adoration, thereby robbing him of his independence and peace, and more often than not becoming the cause of his interminable sufferings); (v) Jara or old age and its attendant decline of the body leading to its decrepit and weakened physical state when the body loses its strength, vigour and stamina, thereby becoming a burden on the person; and finally (vi) Mritu or death of the body. All these factors create an immense amount of discomfort and horrors to the person (i.e. to the Atma that is the true identity of the person) to whom this body belongs.”

There also *other six faults* that are considered as *enemies* of a man—Kaam (worldly passions, lust, desires and yearning), Krodh (anger, indignation and wrathfulness leading to spite and ill temper), Lobh (greed and rapacity), Moha (ignorance based delusions, worldly infatuations, attractions and attachments), Mada (egoism, arrogance, haughtiness and hypocrisy) and Matsarya (envy, jealousy, malice, anger and wrath)—refer Mudgal Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 4 of Rig Veda tradition; and Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 10 of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.

According to Mudgal Upanishad, 4/7 of the Rig Veda tradition, the six delusions, called 'Urmi', that create fear, sorrows, agonies, sufferings and pains to a creature are the following:--(1) hunger, (2) thirst, (3) grief, (4) Moha (worldly attachments, illusions, entrapments), (5) horrors of old age, and (6) death.

The Naradparivrajak Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Canto 7, verse no. 1 describes that a Sanyasi (a renunciate monk or mendicant or hermit or friar) must overcome the six Vikaars of his mind and should not allow them to create any consternation for him.

<sup>3</sup>There are a number of Upanishads that advocate internal forms of worship instead of all external forms of rituals and worships—viz. the *Naradparivrajak Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda which deals with the eclectic philosophy of Sanyas expressly prohibits all external forms of worship in its Canto 5, verse no. 20.

Some of the other Upanishads are the following—(i) Sam Veda tradition—Maitreyu-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 21, 26; Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 50-59; and Sanyaso-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 74-75, 97.

(ii) Atharva Veda tradition—Devi Upanishad, verse nos. 29-30; Narad-Parivrajak Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 75, Canto 5, verse no. 20, Canto 6, verse nos. 7, 37-38, 42, and Canto 7, verse no. 1; Atharvashir Upanishad, Kandika (Canto) 4; Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15 (stanza nos. 1-3); Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad, verse no. 7.

(iii) Krishna Yajur Veda's following Upanishads—Pran Agnihotra Upanishad; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 69, 74; Canto 3, verse no. 26, 29-30; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 21-24.

(iv) Shukla Yajur Veda tradition—Advai Tarak Upanishad, verse nos. 5, 10, 13.]

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### (5.3) Par-Brahm Upanishad:

This Upanishad is primarily classified as a Sanyas Upanishad as it emphasizes the role of Sanyas in Brahm-realisation, or spiritual enlightenment and awakening. It has twenty Mantras or verses.

It opens with sage Shaunak asking sage Pippalaad where the things of this creation were before the latter came into existence, and who is the Lord who created them. In his answer Pippalaad outlines the grand and magnificent virtues of the supreme transcendental Brahm. This Upanishad derives its name from this very fact.

The term 'Brahm' must be understood with a holistic perspective. It refers to the cosmic Consciousness that is responsible for this creation coming into being and acquiring life. From the cosmic perspective of creation, this Consciousness is called Brahm, and from the point of view of the individual unit of the same creation, i.e. at the microcosmic level, it is called the Atma. Consciousness is synonymous with life, and the term 'Pran' is also synonymous with life, though technically 'Pran' means the vital wind or air that is present inside the body of the individual creature. Hence, Brahm, Atma, Pran and Consciousness are synonymous with each other, and they all refer to the same divine entity that is at the core of creation and the quintessential truth of life in this creation.

Everything alive is therefore Brahm in that form. Indeed, all aspects of creation are representative of some aspect or facet of Brahm. The term 'Brahm' as envisioned in this Upanishad incorporates all the aspects of creation, and therefore Brahm is said to have various forms, known as the 'Paads' (limbs, aspects, facets, branches etc.) of Brahm much like we have branches of a tree or divisions and sections of a scripture. To understand the scripture fully we need to have a thorough

knowledge of all its sections or divisions; to learn about the tree we must have a composite view of all its branches. Similarly, to learn about Brahm we must know all the Paads of Brahm.

In the first half, this Upanishad elucidates upon the various Paads (limbs, aspects, facets, views) of Brahm and their metaphysical significance. These Paads are the following—the Tripaad Brahm, i.e. the three planes of existence in which Brahm exists, the Chatush Paad Brahm which corresponds to the four planes of existence, and the Panch Paad Brahm which pertains to the five divine aspects of Brahm. From the metaphysical angle they correspond to the various states of existence of consciousness, viz. the Jagrat state or the waking state, the Swapna state or the dreaming state, the Sushupta state or the deep sleep state, the Turiya state or the post-Sushupta state, and the Turiyateet state which is the super-conscious state of transcendental existence.

The ordinary living being known as the Jiva corresponds to the first three states of existence, and hence to the Tripaad Brahm. When the same Jiva becomes enlightened and self-realised he attains the Chatush Paad of Brahm, and finally when he becomes Brahm-realised he attains the Panch Paad of Brahm. To achieve these eclectic states of existence, the Jiva is advised to take recourse to the 8-fold path of Yoga (verse no. 2). In this context, one should refer to the Tripadvibhut Mahanarayan Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, which is the 11<sup>th</sup> Upanishad of this Veda.

Next comes the discussion about the importance and significance of the sacred thread (called the Yagyopavit or the Brahm Sutra) as well as the tuft of hair worn on the top of the head (called the Shikha) as symbols of Brahm. These concepts have been extensively dealt with in this Upanishad. They are of no real consequence if their true meaning is not understood and practiced in one's thoughts and actions (verse nos. 3, 6-11, 15-20). True sacred thread and tuft of hair is internal awakening and enlightenment about Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness that resides in the inner-self as the pure Atma, and this Gyan (knowledge) itself is like the Agni (the sacred fire) as it burns all spiritual impurities of the aspirant, and renders him holy, divine and pure (verse nos. 12-14).

Finally, the Upanishad concludes that a wise spiritual aspirant should discard external paraphernalia of Sanyas (life of renunciation) such as the sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the head, and instead concentrate on meditating upon Brahm by employing the Mantra 'OM', which he should treat as a representative of his sacred thread as well as the tuft of hair, for attaining Mukti (liberation and deliverance).

## ॥ परब्रह्मोपनिषद् ॥

अथ हैनं महाशालः शौनकोऽङ्गिरसं भगवन्तं पिप्पलादं विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे के संप्रतिष्ठिता भवन्ति खलु । कथं सृज्यन्ते । नित्यात्मन एष महिमा । विभज्य एष महिमा विभुः । क एषः । तस्मै स होवाच । एतत्सत्यं यत्प्रब्रवीमि ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां देवेभ्यः प्राणेभ्यः । परब्रह्मपुरे विरजं निष्कलं शुभ्रमक्षरं विरजं विभाति । स नियच्छति मधुकराश्या निर्मकः । अकर्मस्वपुरस्थितः । कर्मतरः कर्षकवत्फलमनुभवति । कर्ममर्मज्ञाता कर्म करोति । कर्ममर्म ज्ञात्वा कर्म कुर्यात् । को जालं विक्षिपेदेको नैनमपकर्षत्यपकर्षति ॥१॥

atha hainaṃ mahāśālaḥ śaunako'ṅgiraśaṃ bhagavantam pippalādam

vidhivadupasannah papraccha divye brahmapure ke sampratiṣṭhitā bhavanti  
 khalu / katham srjyante / nityātmāna eṣa mahimā / vibhajya eṣa mahimā  
 vibhuḥ / ka eṣaḥ / tasmai sa hovāca / etatsatyaṃ yatprabravāmi  
 brahmavidyāṃ variṣṭhāṃ devebhyaḥ prāṇebhyaḥ / parabrahmapure virajāṃ  
 niṣkalaṃ śubhamakṣaram virajāṃ vibhāti / sa niyacchati madhukararāśyā  
 nirmakaḥ / akarmasvapurasthitaḥ / karmataraḥ karṣakavatphalamanubhavati  
 / karmamarmajñātā karma karoti / karmamarma jñātvā karma kuryāt / ko  
 jālaṃ vikṣipedeko nainamapakarṣatyapakarṣati // 1 //

1. Once, the learned sage Shaunak<sup>1</sup> approached the great sage Pippalaad<sup>2</sup> who was born in the line of sage Angiras, and sat down attentively before him. Then Shaunak asked—‘Were all the things and objects that were created in this world present earlier in the subtle space of sky in the divine heaven known as Brahm-pur?’

[The term ‘pur’ means a place or dwelling. Hence, the ‘Brahm-pur’ refers to the subtle heart of the supreme creator known as Brahm, because it is from this heart of Brahm that the desire to create originated. Brahm, in the purest sense, has no form, and therefore no heart. Brahm is nothing but the formless cosmic Consciousness. But when the latter initiated the process of creation, it acquired a form, albeit a form that was extremely sublime and subtle as compared to the physical visible world that eventually came into existence. This most subtle form of Brahm is known as the ‘Hiranyagarbha’—the self-illuminated and golden cosmic embryo that harboured the entire creation in its ‘garbh’ or womb. It was the cosmic Consciousness that lent this egg its power to create something out of nothing. The Hiranyagarbha imagined the world and had a desire to give shape to this imagination. It had its heart focused on creation of this world. Hence it is said here that the things of creation had their origin in the Brahm-pur.]

How were they created by the supreme Creator? What are the renowned glories and divine virtues of the eternal Atma (the cosmic Consciousness known as the Parmatma, the Supreme Atma, the eternal cosmic Being known as Brahm) who created them? How did this Lord known as Vibhu (one who is almighty, eternal and all-pervading) create them, and then divided them or classified them into countless forms with myriad variations? In other words, who is this Great Lord who could do such stupendous things in a miraculous way?

Pippalaad replied—‘The great knowledge of the supreme Brahm which I shall now narrate to you is indeed the truth. That ‘truthful Being’ empowers the different Gods and the vital winds known as Pran to perform their assigned functions (duties).

This Supreme Being lives in the ‘Brahm-pur’ (literally the city of Brahm), and he is honoured as being ‘Viraj’ (neutral or immune to the effects of Raja and other Gunas such as Sata and Tama; one who is immaculate and holy) and ‘Nishkal’ (one who has no taints, blemishes, blights, shortcomings and impurities; one who has no parts or divisions or fractions as he is immutable and an indivisible whole).

He is ‘Shubhra’ (one who is auspicious and holy) and ‘Akshar’ (imperishable and eternal). His glory, divinity and magnificence is supreme, unquestioned and beyond reproach.

He is called ‘Nirmak’ as he is the supreme controller and regulator of everything in creation; he is the one who had designed ‘destiny’ of all things in existence; he is the supreme cosmic astute architect of this creation.

He is like a Madhukar (the honey-bee) because he collects the best elements in creation, and gives the best to the world he creates and rears. [Like the honey-bee which collects nectar from an assortment of flowers, and then transforms it into honey

for the benefit of the rest of the world, the supreme astute Creator known as Brahm collects numerous primary elements of creation which are useless in themselves, and then moulds them in accordance to his wishes to produce a lively and dynamic creation of an astounding variety that is so productive, magnificent and beautiful.]

He remains absolutely neutral and dispassionate in his divine abode, appearing to do nothing. [In other words, after he had finished completing the task of creation, he assumed the role of a neutral guardian and judge who would dispassionately control this creation from within. His neutrality and restraint were a necessity for impartial regulation of this creation, to reward those who were good and punish who were evil.]

[The following example—that only those who are fools get mentally and emotionally involved in doing deeds, then expecting results from them, and then either enjoying them or suffering from them—is cited to explain why the Supreme Being became neutral once he has finished the task of creation. In fact, even during the actual process of creation he was dispassionate. He created the world simply because the latter had to be created as it was the time for its coming into being. It was destined to be created because there were so many countless creatures who had not yet finished the cycle of birth and death depending upon the deeds that were done by them before the creation suddenly ended at the time of dooms-day. The various laws of Nature and metaphysics demanded that the creation be re-started because its sudden demise or end could not lead to a natural dissipation of energy and subsidence of desires in a gradual manner. The abrupt end brought about a build-up of unspent energy and pent-up desires which would burst out nevertheless like the steam trapped inside the body of the pressure cooker would make the latter burst if it is not allowed to escape from the nozzle. Hence, the ‘end’ had to be reversed, and creation ‘started afresh’. This translates into a new beginning, called the ‘birth’ of the creation.]

An ordinary Jiva (creature; living being) who is not wise and enlightened does so many deeds with the aim of attaining some goal in life in the world in which he currently lives, as well as in the world of after-life much like a farmer who toils in his field to get rewards that are commensurate with his efforts. [If he works hard and takes proper care of his field, he is rewarded with a good harvest; otherwise he is ruined.]

On the other hand, a wise man who is aware of the philosophy of ‘Karma’<sup>3</sup> (that the doing of deeds in the sense that one becomes mentally and emotionally involved in them, and expecting results from them, is the root cause for getting trapped in the cycle of birth and death, or for being re-born) does deeds, but he does them for his internal cleansing and as a means of his worship and service of the Lord.

[That is, a wise man does not hanker for material benefits from his efforts. He does everything like an ordinary man, but his approach to doing deeds is vastly different from the ordinary man who is ignorant of the philosophy of Karma. The theory of Karma and its consequences states that what a Jiva does is bound to have its effect on his destiny. The operating phrase is ‘doing something’, and if one does not get involved at the mental, intellectual, sentimental and emotional level in any deed done by the body, then this phrase does not apply to him. So no consequences accrue to a man who is not involved in doing deeds. But usually this is difficult to achieve. The general situation is that all the creatures are neck-deep involved in doing deeds and expecting some reward for their efforts. So, at the time of their death some residual deed is left to be done and some rewards are yet to be enjoyed. This in turn creates a situation when he wishes to take a new birth to fulfill his unaccomplished desires and enjoy the fruits of his efforts. In the new birth, the past cycle is repeated.



In this way, the wheel of birth and death continues to rotate infinitely, and the Jiva remains trapped in it like the ox tied to the water-wheel. The only way to stop it is to stop doing deeds.

But since the Jiva lives in a gross world that moves on the wheel of deeds and actions, it is not practically feasible for him not to do anything at all if he has to survive in this world. So the trick is not to get involved in the deeds done or actions taken by the body at the mental, intellectual, sentimental and emotional level. This absolves the creature from being accused of doing anything. So naturally he is freed from the cycle of deeds and their consequences. When the time comes for his shedding the gross body, his Atma, i.e. his true 'self' does not desire to come back again to do any left-over deeds or to enjoy any rewards; he does not even expect any rewards in the first place. This means that he is freed—i.e. he finds his Mukti.]

A wise man who understands the philosophy of Karma and wishes to get rid of all sorts of worldly delusions and temptations does deeds selflessly, and with a holistic approach towards doing them. Which wise and erudite man would be so foolish as to willingly allow himself to get entangled in the web of deeds and their ensnaring consequences if he is aware of the true way, the right and the auspicious of doing deeds (as outlined above)? In other words, no wise man would allow himself to be entangled in the snare of deeds and their consequences. He would choose to remain free from this grave spiritual fetter.

[This explains why the Supreme Being could remain dispassionate and maintain his neutrality inspite of not only creating this world himself but also actively participating in its upkeep.] (1).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>Sage *Shaunak*— Sage Shaunak was a wise and learned sage and derived his name after his father sage Shunak. He is regarded as an incarnation of Indra, the king of Gods. He was an expert on the Vedas, especially the Rik/Rig Veda and the majority of his works revolve around this particular Veda. They are known as 'Anukramanika' (indices). His magnum opus is the 'Brihad-devta' which deals with the deities of the Vedas. He had a large following of disciples, the chief being Ashwalyaana. He appears in many ancient scriptures such as Shatpath Brahmin, 13/5/3/5; Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 2/5/20; Chandogya Upanishad, 1/9/3; Mundak Upanishad, 1/1/3; Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad, 4/7.

The Par Brahm Upanishad, which is the twentieth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, was revealed to sage Shaunak by sage Pippalaad.

The Sita Upanishad, which is the ninth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, mentions sage Shaunak in its verse no. 6 as the great ancient sage who had revealed the three esoteric mystical forms of Sita, the divine consort of Lord Ram. Sita was actually a personified form of the all-powerful cosmic 'Shakti' of Brahm. this Shakti represented the almighty energy, dynamism and powers of the Supreme Being that was revealed both at the macrocosmic as well as the microcosmic level of creation. These three forms of Sita have been revealed by the sage in his composition called 'Shaunak Tantra'. This is a text used to worship Sita as a Shakti or divine Goddess using her Beej Mantra in mystical forms of worship.

<sup>2</sup>Sage *Pippalaad*— Sage Pippalaad perhaps got his name because he might have been used to eating a lot of Pipal, the fruit of the Pipal tree (the Indian Fig—*ficus religiosa*) or a kind of long pepper called by this name. He was a great teacher of metaphysics, a master of the doctrine of the Upanishads, and one of the greatest exponents of their philosophy. He has taught many sages and seers of the period, such as Skaakalya, in Panch Brahm Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition wherein he describes the fundamental unity of creation and affirms that the five forms in which the Divinity exists are basically the revelation of the same Lord, and to the six sages Sukeshaa, Satyakam, Saurayayani, Kausalya, Bhargava and Kabandhi in the

Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition wherein he answers their six questions to their satisfaction. He was taught about the spiritual wisdom pertaining to the spiritual aspect of life after death by Nachiketa who had himself got this knowledge from Yam, the God of death, as narrated in Katha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda. Pippalaad was present on the bed of arrows on which Bhishma, the legendary patriarch of the epic Mahabharat period, lay prior to his death when he taught wisdom to Yudhisthir. [Refer Mahabharat, Shanti Parva, 47/9.] This shows that Pippalaad was a contemporary sage of the Mahabharat period.

When the two facts—one, that the Panch Brahm Upanishad was preached by him to Shaakalya who had died in the court of king Janak during a debate with the great sage Yagyavalkya when the latter cursed him for being arrogant and haughty of his knowledge and showing irreverence and impertinence as narrated in Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahmin 9, verse no. 26 of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, and Yagyavalkya's annoyance with him as is evident in the preceding verses—3/9/18, 25, and second, that Pippalaada was present in the Mahabharat war period that occurred in the later half of the third era called Dwapar, the era of Lord Krishna, it is easy to conclude that this sage had a very long life, easily straddling at least two eras, i.e. the Treta (Ram's era) and Dwapar (Krishna's era) if not three, i.e. Sat Yug which was the first era, till Dwapar Yug which was the third era.

It is believed that he was the son of Dadhichi and his wife Suvarka. The wife of Pippalaad was called Padmavati. His son was known after him as Pippalaadi, and he was taught by the great sage Jabal which forms the text of the Jabal Upanishad of the Sam Veda tradition. It is a legend that he had ordained Shani, the malefic God who casts evil eye, to spare children below 12 years.

The Padma Puran describes another sage with this name who had become very arrogant because of special powers that he had acquired due to Tapa (severe austerity and penance), but later he was chastised by the creator Brahma. [Refer Padma Puran, Chapters 60-62.]

It is narrated in the Brihajjabal Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, in its Brahman 7, verse no. 5, that he had accompanied the learned king Janak to the abode of Prajapati Brahma, the creator of this world inhabited by living beings, to learn about the importance of wearing the Tripundra, the three lines made from a paste of the sacred ash taken from the pit of the fire sacrifice and worn by all the devotees of Lord Shiva as his symbol. After that, Pippalaad went to Vaikuntha, the abode of Lord Vishnu the sustainer of this creation to know more about this Tripundra and its esoteric secrets, metaphysical significance and mystical powers as narrated in Brahman 7, verse no. 6, and then to Lord Kalagnirudra, the form of Lord Shiva himself who had first revealed this Upanishad to one sage Bhusund (Brahmans 1-6), to learn more about it as narrated in Brahman 7, verse nos. 6-7.

The Par Brahm Upanishad, which is the twentieth Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, was revealed to sage Shaunak by sage Pippalaad. Verse no. 1 of this Upanishad, in its opening stanza, says that Pippalaad was born in the lineage of sage Angiras.

The name of sage Pippalaad appears in a number of other Upanishads as well—viz. Atharva Shikha, Kandika 1, verse no. 1; the Brihajjabal Upanishad, Brahman 7, verse nos. 5-7; the Prashna Upanishad, question (Canto) 1, verse no. 1.

<sup>3</sup>The *philosophy of Karma*—References of Upanishads dealing with the concept of deeds and actions:—

(i) Rig Veda's Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 1.

(ii) Sam Veda's Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 5, Section 3-10; Canto 7, Section 21.

(iii) Shukla Yajur Veda = Adhyatma Upanishad, verse nos. 49-60, 66; Niralambo-panishad, verse no. 11-12; Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 3/1/3, 3/2/11-12,

3/9/28, 4/3/12, 4/3/33, 4/3/36, 4/4/1, 5/10-5/11, 6/1/1-6, 6/2/2,14-16, etc.; Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 23-26; Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, 2/4/2-3.

(iv) Krishna Yajur Veda = Kathrudra Upanishad, verse no. 13, 20-26; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 12, Canto 2, verse no. 12, 48, Canto 4, verse no. 35; Rudra Hridaya Upanishad, verse no. 35; Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 7, and Canto 6, verse no. 3; Sarwasaar Upanishad, verse no. 6; Taittiriya Upanishad, Valli 2, Anuvak 6; Katho-panishad, Canto 1, Valli 1, verse no. 20, and the whole of Canto 1, Valli 2 right up to Canto 2, Valli 3; Skanda Upanishad, verse no. 7; Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 67.

(v) Atharva Veda—Mundak Upanishad, Mundak (Canto) 1, section 2, verse no. 12; Mundak (Canto) 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Mundak (Canto) 3, section 2, verse no. 1; Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 8, paragraph no. 14; Par Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 1.

The Atharva Veda's Mundak Upanishad describes the great spiritual rewards obtainine by an aspirant by doing selfless Karma or deed/service in its Mundak (Canto) 1, section 2, verse no. 12; Mundak (Canto) 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Mundak (Canto) 3, section 2, verse no. 1.

The Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 67 describes succinctly how Karma or deeds and their consequences can be overcome.

The Varaaha Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse no. 48, and Canto 4, verse no. 35 describe the relationship between the deed, the doer and the cause.

The Adhyatma Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition describes the concept of doing deeds and its effect on the spiritual liberation or bondage of the creature in fine detail in its verse nos. 49-60.

The Kathrudra Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 13 asserts that the supreme transcendental Brahm or the quintessential spiritual Truth of creation as well as Mukti or liberation and deliverance is not possible by doing various deeds in this mortal world. This same idea is endorsed in Rudra Hridaya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse no. 35 which asserts that deeds or Karma do not provide the Atma of the creature with liberation and deliverance from this world but it is Gyan (truthful knowledge of the spiritual truths) that do.

The 'Karma Chakra' or the giant wheel of deeds and their consequences has been described in the Shwetashwatar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 6, verse no. 3. The three Paths followed by a creature according to the deeds done by him are referred to in Shwetashwatar Upanishad, 4/7. The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 2, verse no. 48 describes how one can become free from the fetters created by 'deeds'. The Niralambo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 11-12 describes the concept of Karma. The Sarwasaar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 6 describes the concept of how and why the creature becomes the doer of deeds

What happens to ignorant people after death is explained in Brihad Aranyak 4/4/1. The Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse nos. 23-26 defines what constitutes of true 'Karma Yoga'. The Mandal Brahmin Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, 2/4/2-3 describes the philosophy of Deeds.

The Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 8, paragraph no. 14, states that there cannot be any Kaarya without a Kaaran.]

प्राणदेवताश्चत्वारः । ताः सर्वा नाड्यः सुषुप्तश्येनाकाशवत् । यथा श्येनः खमाश्रित्य याति स्वमालयं कुलायम् । एवं सुषुप्तं ब्रूत । अयं च परं च स सर्वत्र हिरण्मये परे कोशे । अमृता ह्येषा नाडीत्रयं संचरति । तस्य त्रिपादं ब्रह्म । एषात्रेष्य ततोऽनुतिष्ठति । अन्यत्र ब्रूत । अयं च परं च सर्वत्र हिरण्मये

परे कोशे । यथैष देवदत्तो यष्ट्या च ताड्यमानो नैवैति । एवमिष्टापूर्तकर्मा शुभाशुभैर्न लिप्यते । यथा कुमारको निष्काम आनन्दमभियाति । तथैष देवः स्वप्न आनन्दमभिधावति । वेद एव परं ज्योतिः । ज्योतिषा मा ज्योतिरानन्दयत्येवमेव । तत्परं यच्चित्तं परमात्मानमानन्दयति । शुभ्रवर्णमाजायतेश्वरात् । भूयस्तेनैव मार्गेण स्वप्नस्थानं नियच्छति । जलूकाभाववद्भ्यर्थकाममाजायतेश्वरात् । तावतात्मानमानन्दयति । परसंधि यदपरसन्धीति । तत्परं नापरं त्यजति । तदैवं कपालाष्टकं संधाय य एष स्तन इवावलम्बते सेन्द्रयोनिः स वेदयोनिरिति । अत्र जाग्रति शुभाशुभातिरिक्तः शुभाशुभैरपि कर्मभिर्न लिप्यते । य एष देवोऽन्यदेवस्य संप्रसादोऽन्तर्याम्यसङ्गचिद्रूपः पुरुषः । प्रणवहंसः परं ब्रह्म । न प्राणहंसः । प्रणवो जीवः । आद्या देवता निवेदयति । य एवं वेद । तत्कथं निवेदयते । जीवस्य ब्रह्मत्वमापादयति ॥२॥

prāṇadevtāścātvarāḥ / tāḥ sarvā nāḍyaḥ suṣuptaśyenākāśavat / yathā śyenaḥ khamāśritya yāti svamālayaṁ kulāyaṁ / evaṁ suṣuptaṁ brūta / ayaṁ ca paraṁ ca sa sarvatra hiraṇmaye pare kośe / amṛtā hyeṣā nāḍītrayaṁ saṁcarati / tasya tripādaṁ brahma / eṣātreṣya tato'nutiṣṭhati / anyatra brūta / ayaṁ ca paraṁ ca sarvatra hiraṇmaye pare kośe / yathaiṣa devadatto yaṣṭyā ca tāḍyamāno naivaiti / evamiṣṭāpūrtakarma śubhāśubhairna lipyate / yathā kumārako niṣkāma ānandamabhiyāti / tathaiṣa devaḥ svapna ānandamabhidhāvāti / veda eva paraṁ jyotiḥ / jyotiṣā mā jyotirānandayatyevameva / tatparaṁ yaccittaṁ paramātmānamānandayati / śubhravarṇamājāyateśvarāt / bhūyastenaiva mārgena svapnasthānaṁ niyacchati / jalūkābhāvavadyarthākāmamājāyateśvarāt / tāvatātmānamānandayati / parasandhi yadaparasandhīti / tatparaṁ nāparaṁ tyajati / tadaivaṁ kapālaṣṭakaṁ sandhāya ya eṣa stana ivāvalambate sendrayoniḥ sa vedayoniriti / atra jāgrati / śubhāśubhātiriktaḥ śubhāśubhairapi karmabhirna lipyate / ya eṣa devo'nyadevāsyā saṁprasādo'ntaryāmyasaṅgacidrūpaḥ puruṣaḥ / praṇavahaṁsaḥ paraṁ brahma / na prāṇahaṁsaḥ / praṇavo jīvaḥ / ādyā devatā nivedayati / ya evaṁ veda / tatkathaṁ nivedayate / jīvasya brahmatvamāpādayati // 2 //

2. [The sage now narrates how the Pran, literally meaning vital factor of life that is a synonym of the consciousness present inside the body of all living beings, and which represents the supreme cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm, moves inside the body of the creature to keep the latter alive and active. Intertwined in this discussion are the various states of existence of the consciousness. It is then outlined how the Jiva, the living being who personifies Brahm, is able to attain Brahm-hood by following the 8-fold path of Yoga.]

The Pran, the life-bearing vital wind or air that sustains life in the body of the living being known as the Jiva, is regarded as being synonymous with 'consciousness'. This 'consciousness' is a universal constant factor of the living creation, an entity or factor without which there would be no existence of life.

This Pran moves in the body of the creature through the four chief Naadis (literally tubular ducts in the body through which life or consciousness flows inside the body of the creature). These Naadis are four in number and have the following names—Rama, Arama, Ichha, and Purnarbhava.

When the Pran gets tired or weary of wandering between the Rama and Arama Naadis during the two states of existence of the creature, such as the Jagrat or the

waking state and the Swpana or the dreaming state respectively, tired like a kite or an eagle flying high in the sky, it (the Pran, the consciousness) wants to take rest. For this, the Pran enters the Sushupta or deep sleep state (which comes after the dreaming state is crossed, and is the state of existence when the Pran need not bother about moving anywhere, but rest blissfully).

The Pran, which is a personified form of the divine Lord (because it infuses life and consciousness into the otherwise lifeless, inert and inane gross body) moves unhindered in the body of the living being through the medium (channel; route) of the three Naadis representing the three states of existence of consciousness. [These three states are Jagrat or waking, Swapna or dreaming, and Sushupta or deep sleep states respectively.<sup>1</sup>]

The Pran or life consciousness moves (pervades; pulsates) throughout the brightly illuminated sky ('Hiranya-maye Para-kash') represented by the inner-self of the creature like the eagle or kite flying in the sky that is brightly lit during the daytime.

[The creature is compared to the kite that leaves its perch on the ground and flies high in the sky brightly lit during the daytime. By evening or sunset it gets tired and comes back to its nest to rest. The Pran or the consciousness remains active in the world during the waking state which is the gross level of existence and corresponds to the kite remaining close to the ground. Then the Pran begins to imagine things just like a man sees dreams. Even during dreams the Pran or the consciousness cannot find rest because it is as active as it was during the actual involvement in the world during the waking state. The only difference is that now, during the dreaming state, this involvement is at the subtle level of existence. This second state of dreams is compared to the kite flying high in the sky, because now the kite has left the gross physical surface of the earth and reached the subtle world of the sky, the sky which is illuminated by the rays of the sun. Obviously, the vision the kite gets from a high level in the sky would be broader and vast as compared to the limited area it could see when nearer to the surface of the earth. So, when the consciousness begins to dream, it conjures up a vastly fascinating world which is widely different from the reality of existence.

But none of these two states give the Jiva, the living being represented by the Pran or the consciousness present inside his body, the rest and peace that he desires to have. Therefore he moves to the third state of existence called the deep sleep state or the Sushupta state.

[Previously only two Naadis, i.e. the Rama and the Arama, were mentioned through which the Pran moved in the body. Now, the third Naadi named 'Iccha' is cited. It is through this Naadi that the Pran moves to the third state of Sushupta which is the state of deep sleep. The word 'Iccha' literally means to have a wish or desire. Hence, when the Pran 'wishes or desires' to rest, it moves through this Iccha Naadi.]

When the Pran (consciousness; the subtle 'living' dimension of the creature) enters this third state of existence known as the Sushupta, it finds rest and peace, which incidentally is its natural state. Hence, it is deemed to have attained its primary form—of being at complete rest, peace, serenity and tranquility; of being fully blissful.

These three stages of the Pran (life and consciousness) are representative of the three aspects of Brahm, called the 'Tripaad Brahm'. [This is because of two reasons—(i) all living beings pass through these three stages in life, i.e. they wake up, they dream, and they sleep soundly, and (ii) the fact that all living beings are visible

images of the invisible Brahm. So the three stages of the living world are three dimensions of existence of Brahm for all practical purposes.]

In spite of flying high in the illuminated sky, the creature continues to fall and get trapped in the valley represented by these three stages. [The word 'creature' here refers to the Atma because it represents the living being's true self, and the 'illuminated sky' refers to the inherent wisdom that the Atma possesses. The 'falling from the sky' is a figure of speech to indicate demotion of the Atma from its exalted stature to that of creature ensnared in the affairs of the world and tied in fetters to the shackles of the mundane world consisting of a cycle of birth and death. It refers to the instance of the high-flying bird who can easily avoid getting trapped by a bird-catcher's net if it is not tempted by greed and overcome by ignorance, for then it voluntarily gets ensnared. The bird is greedy to eat the bait, and it is unaware that this bait is laid out to catch it rather than to feed it. Say then, who is to blame for the bird's ill-fate and precarious condition except the bird itself? Similarly, who is to be blamed for the creature getting trapped in the world other than the creature himself?]

Just like a man named Devdutta who is beaten by a stick and wounded while he was asleep gets so terrified at the prospect of going back to sleep again after he wakes up, a wise man who is 'awakened' or enlightened about the truth of existence, about the truth of the world (that it is false and ensnaring for the soul), and the truth about his own self (that it is eternally free and the quintessential consciousness known as the Atma which trapped in the gross body and unnecessarily suffering due to its ignorance) by means of studying of the scriptures or when taught by the Guru (spiritual advisor), he too would shun falling in the trap of this gross world and its equally gross mundane life characterized by the three states of existence in which the Pran (consciousness) oscillates as narrated above.

[Devdutta is an imaginary man who is beaten while asleep. The pain is so great that when he wakes up he becomes paranoid of sleep, and would be terrified at the prospect of falling asleep lest he would be subjected to more beating by his enemies. Similarly, a wise man who comes to realise that all the sufferings he is being subjected to in this world are his own making, and the cause is that he has forgotten about the exalted nature of his 'self' known as the Atma which is nothing but pure consciousness and eternally free and blissful, and has instead treated the gross body as his identity. Once he has become enlightened about the reality of his Atma and the falsehood of the world, he would certainly not do anything that would result in the Atma getting trapped in the snare of delusions that are so characteristic of this world. He would be terrified by the thought of taking birth in this world again because he has closely experienced the horrors of this world during his current life. So he would endeavour to do anything he can to ensure that he would not have to come back again. In other words, he would strive to obtain his final Mukti or Moksha, meaning attaining spiritual liberation and deliverance or spiritual emancipation and salvation. Like the man called Devdutta, he would be paranoid of this world and terrified of the prospects of getting involved in its affairs.]

Therefore, such an awakened and enlightened man would not allow himself to get trapped in the cycle of deeds and their consequences. He would shun doing either auspicious deeds or inauspicious deeds; he would keep a safe distance from both doing good deeds or bad deeds in order to achieve any worldly objectives because he knows that each deed would produce its own effects, and once he allows himself to fall prey to the temptation of doing certain deed to obtain certain objective he would be sucked in the vortex of deeds and consequences from which it would be almost impossible to extricate later on.

He knows that doing deeds with emotional involvement in them and with expectation of results from these deeds would be a sufficient ground to automatically trap him in the world from where it would be difficult for him to retrieve himself later on. So he maintains his dispassionate and detached attitude even if he is bound to do anything in this world due to exigencies of life. In other words, he does not allow his Atma to get involved in the deeds done by his body. This is practically possible if he does not allow his mind and heart to be involved in the deeds done by the body—i.e. if he does deeds dispassionately, with total detachment, and without expecting any rewards or results from doing deeds. He does them as and when they come along.

[Earlier in this verse, the example of the bird flying high is cited. This bird either gets tired by continuous flying during the day in search of prey, swooping down on it when sighted, and running away from its enemies in hot pursuit, or it gets trapped by the bird-catcher's net in its greed for the bait laid by the cunning bird-catcher. On the other hand, had the bird not wished to catch a prey, or had it remained contented with whatever it had, it would have remained calmly gliding in the sky and returned to its nest at the end of the day instead of getting tired by endlessly pursuing its prey or dodging its enemies, or getting trapped by the bird-catcher's snare. Likewise, a wise man who remains contented and fulfilled is always at peace with himself. He accepts whatever comes his way; he does deeds according to the necessities and exigencies of circumstances without getting unduly perturbed or agitated about the deed and its result.]

Such a wise and enlightened man finds comfort, happiness, peace and contentedness in any situation he lives in just like an innocent child who feels comfortable and happy in any toy it finds to play with without having preference for any particular thing.

[He is not perturbed and affected at all by the troubles and tribulations of the physical world which he faces and interacts with during his waking state. He is not at all concerned with what he imagines in his dreams; he does not wish that what he sees in his dreams impact his waking life. And of course he remains peaceful like one sleeping soundly during the deep sleep state. In other words, his composure and poise is perpetual and steady.]

A wise, enlightened and self-realised spiritual aspirant realises the divine nature of his truthful 'self' known as the Atma—that it is a fount and an embodiment of spiritual illumination and bliss, that it is as radiant and splendorous as the brilliant rays of the bright sun shining in the otherwise dark sky—when he is enlightened about it by the teaching of his moral preceptor and teacher (known as the Guru) as well as by the study of the scriptures. With this knowledge, he is able to attain the citadel of bliss, felicity and beatitude. In other words, he becomes aware of the exalted stature of his 'true self' known as the Atma; he realises that his Atma is a personification of the supreme Atma known as Brahm, the Atma that is as brilliant and splendorous as the celestial sun; he realises that this Atma is free from the countless blights and blemishes that are hallmarks of everything else in this gross creation. He discovers to his extreme delight that the genes of divinity and holiness are running through his system, and that he is no ordinary mortal creature squirming in misery and filth, but is an exalted being who is eternal, graceful and divine. He therefore has nothing more to achieve or claim.

He thus exults at this grand discovery of his own 'self', and with it he begins to radiate a divine spiritual halo that resembles the shine of the sun in the sky. He is so exhilarated and ecstatic that he indeed becomes a personification of eternal bliss that characterizes the Atma. Such a person is deemed to have realised the Parmatma, the

supreme Atma known as Brahm, and he feels ever contented in the supreme bliss that this realisation brings to him as he understands that his own Atma is the supreme transcendental Brahm present in his inner-being as his 'true self'.

Auspiciousness and divinity are the characteristic virtues of Ishwar, the Supreme Being, and when this Ishwar is revealed inside one's own being, his own inner-self, it is obvious and natural that corresponding virtues of greatness, grandness, divinity, holiness and sublimity sprout in the inner-self of the realised person. This makes his Chitta (mind and sub-conscious) extremely happy and ever contented. When this state of enlightenment is experienced by him, he relishes it, he enjoys it, he exults in it, and he remains steady in it. He literally wishes to remain cocooned in the shell of bliss and contentedness that comes with self-realisation (much like an oyster that lives peacefully within its shell).

It is like the case of a man tired of the toil and torments of this physical world of his waking state going to sleep and seeing a pleasant dream where he lives a life of happiness and bliss. He would prefer to remain dreaming rather than waking up to the harsh realities of a world ridden with uncountable miseries and grief. So, when a person realises the truth of his 'self' which is blissful and contented, and which is equivalent to the state in which Brahm exists, he experiences the bliss that comes with knowing the Atma. He then realises the futility of his engagement in the world, doing various deeds and pursuing their results which snatch him of his peace, serenity and tranquility.

Even as a caterpillar easily migrates from one twig to another, a wise man easily transmits his inner-self from the symbolic physical state of existence in this gross material world where he is surrounded and tormented by its inherent miseries and problems to the symbolic world of dreams which give him peace and rest. That is, though outwardly he may be living in the world and going about his routine life in an ordinary way, internally he remains aloof and distanced from everything surrounding him in this physical world. Thus he gets internal peace and stability inspite of being surrounded by tribulations and upheaval of the world that are marked by miseries and instability.

He acquires the ability to live in any state he wishes, whether it is the Jagrat, the Swapana or the Sushupta state. In other words, he can live in this world, he can dream and still remain wise, enlightened and fully self-realised. He is deemed to have mastered the art of Samadhi in a holistic manner. During this state of Samadhi, a man may be physically wide awake but he is as good as sleeping soundly in as much as he registers nothing of the gross and physical world in which he lives.

[Samadhi is a spiritual state of transcendental bliss obtained when one has accessed the super-consciousness. It is a trance-like state when the person is unaware of the surrounding world. He might be wide awake in the physical world at the physical plane of existence, but internally he is lost in deep meditation and contemplation. He might go about his daily routine but remains lost in his thoughts. It is not a mental disorder but a state of transcendental existence of consciousness.]

In this way, his own 'self' becomes one with the supreme 'Self'; his Atma becomes one with the Parmatma or Brahm. Or it can be said that his Atma becomes a personification of Brahm. Such a wise and enlightened man does not have to abandon his body to realise Brahm—Brahm rather lives in him; he becomes an image of the blissful and peaceful transcendental Brahm.

Now, if one is not able to attain this eclectic state of existence that makes him self and Brahm realised, that makes him experience the Atma and Brahm and their attendant bliss and peace first hand by listening to and studying of the scriptures



alone, and is unable to find his final Mukti (spiritual liberation and deliverance), then he should take the help of Yoga with its eight branches or limbs. This is known as 'Kapaal-ashtak' process because it involves practicing all the eight steps of Yoga (meditation) in order to make his Pran (vital wind or air) rise up to his skull where he experiences extreme thrill and ecstasy, and finally escaping of this Pran through the Brahm-Randhra, which is the hair-like slit in the cranium, into the outer atmosphere to provide the practitioner of Yoga his final Mukti from the bondage of the physical gross body.

[The eight-fold path of Yoga, or the eight steps of doing Yoga comprehensively are the following—Yam, Niyam, Aasan, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharna, Dhyana and Samadhi<sup>2</sup>.]

They should be employed to wash off all the taints and impurities of the inner-self and attain the knowledge of Brahm. The Atma lives in a docile, humble, inactive, un-awakened and un-aroused form in the subtle heart of the creature like an undeveloped, flacid or withered breast, and it is rejuvenated and awakened during the practice of the Kapaal-ashtak Yoga like a fully developed, fleshy, rounded and robust breast. It then rises up and blooms like the flower of the plantain tree. It is the path that leads to the auspicious Ishwar or the Lord known as Brahm. That is, it is the path that leads to self-realisation and experiencing of the cosmic Consciousness with its magnificent glories and extreme bliss in the inner-self of the aspirant. It is also called Indra Yoni or Veda Yoni.

[The Atma is called 'Indra Yoni' because it is the Atma that inspires and motivates the organs of the body of the creature to act and do things in this world. It is the Atma that harbours the desire to do deeds and then get involved doing them and enjoying their results. This is why it is called the 'yoni' or the womb. Should the Atma decide that it does not want to get involved in the world, it would not inspire the organs of the body, called the 'Indris', to get involved in the world and its activities.

It is also called the 'Veda Yoni' as it is the Atma that inspires one to follow the path laid down by the scriptures known as the Vedas.]

In the aforesaid manner, one who contemplates and meditates upon the Ishwar in his lotus-like heart rises above the mundane considerations of one thing being auspicious, righteous, noble and good, and the other not being so. He never gets entangled in any kind of deeds, whether they are auspicious, noble and holy, or are not so.

[A spiritually enlightened and wise person remains dispassionate towards all kinds of deeds and their results. He becomes an epitome of the virtues of equanimity, neutrality and detachment. Even while he appears to be doing some deed in the physical world, his internal 'self' known as the Atma is absolutely unconcerned by what the gross body of his does.]

Who is that Ishwar who lives in the lotus-like heart? Well, he is the one who bestows all the other Gods with their happiness and joys. He lives in the inner-self of all living beings, and therefore knows everything, including the hidden thoughts, emotions, ideas and intentions of all. He is all alone; he is serene; he does not have company; he does not take sides; he is unpartisan and aloof. He is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness. He is the primal Purush, the Viraat Purush who is the all-pervading and invisible almighty macrocosmic Lord from whom the creation is revealed.

He is the supreme transcendental Brahm that is known as 'Pranav Hans'—i.e. he is represented by the cosmic ethereal Consciousness known as Pranav, as well as by the divine bird Swan which is regarded as an epitome of purity and wisdom. But

he is not the ‘Pran Hans’—i.e. he is not the divine Swan that is used as a metaphor for the Prans known as the vital winds or airs present in their physical dimension inside the body of the creature in the form of breath and other winds that flow inside the physical gross body and keep it alive. [In other words, Brahm is the pure cosmic Consciousness that is much higher in stature than the vital airs known as Pran which infuse and sustain life in this creation, though this Consciousness is also responsible for infusing and sustaining life in the creation. The vital winds would not be able to do anything if there is no consciousness in the body of the creature. This is proved when a man becomes paralyzed in a single organ—the Pran present in the body is unable to keep the concerned organ active when the ‘consciousness’ decides to leave it.]

The Pranav or Brahm is also known as the Jiva, the individual living being. That is, there is no difference between the supreme transcendental Brahm representing the cosmic Consciousness and the truthful identity of the living being which is his Atma, his soul and true ‘self’.

[In other words, Brahm is the cosmic, subtle and sublime Divinity that is represented by the cosmic Consciousness known as Pranav. This Pranav produces the cosmic sound called Naad, which in turn is represented by the monosyllabic word OM. The same Brahm is revealed as the Jiva, the living being, in the form of his truthful identity known as the Atma. This Atma is also known as Hans, the pure and immaculate soul of the creature.

This Brahm is not the physical air which is broadly known as Pran, but is the ‘consciousness’ known as the Atma that is at the core of everything in this living world. Brahm is the enigmatic and esoteric divine entity that is synonymous with life and consciousness in this creation, and therefore all entities that have life are synonyms of Brahm. But it must be remembered that Brahm is a term applied to that aspect of ‘consciousness’ that has a cosmic, subtle, sublime and ethereal dimension, rather than a gross and physical one that is confined to this physical gross world.]

Brahm is ‘Pranav’ because it is the cosmic Consciousness that uniformly permeates each corner of creation, and this Consciousness generates the cosmic sound known as Naad which is recognized and accessed by the means of the word ‘OM’, which is itself a sound. In other words, Brahm has its manifested sound form as OM. Therefore we deduce that OM, being a word, is a representative of Brahm or Pranav. It is a name assigned to the formless and invisible entity known as the cosmic Consciousness represented by the terms Brahm as well as Pranav. Just like the Jiva (living being) having a particular name assigned to him, OM is a specific term assigned to Pranav and Brahm.

Brahm, who is the eternal and primary Lord, is also manifested as the Jiva, the living being. How a person who knows this esoteric secret can ever agree to accept that there is difference or some degree of distinction or separation between Brahm and the Jiva because he is convinced that they are one and the same?

He never imagines that there is a difference between Brahm and the Jiva<sup>3</sup>; he is convinced that both the Jiva and Brahm are in reality the same Consciousness existing in two different planes—with the Jiva symbolizing the grosser aspect of creation and Brahm standing for the subtler aspect of creation (2).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The various states of existence of consciousness have been referred to in verse no. 5 of the present Upanishad, and they have been called the four and five Paads of Brahm.

These states have also been dealt with in the following two Upanishads of the Atharva Veda tradition—(i) Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 1-2; and (ii) Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad, paragraph no. 6.

The various aspects of Pran, the vital wind, have been elucidated in the following Upanishads:—

(i) Sam Veda—*Chandogya Upanishad* in its Canto 3, sections 13; Canto 5, section 1, verse nos. 6-15; Canto 5, sections 19-23 (describes how the five winds are satisfied; it also enumerates the Mantras pertaining to the five Prans); and Canto 7, section 15, verse no. 1; *Jabal Darshan panishad*, Canto 4, verse nos. 23-34; *Maitrayanu Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 6-7 (which describes the functions of these winds).

(ii) Shukla Yajur Veda—*Subalo Upanishad*, Canto 9, verse nos. 1-14; *Paingalo-panishad*, Canto 2, verse no. 3; *Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse no. 5, 8-9; Canto 2, verse nos. 54, 77-87; *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, Canto 3, Brahman 9, verse no. 26; Canto 4, Brahman 1, verse no. 3; Canto 4, Brahman 2, verse no. 4; Canto 5, Brahman 13; Canto 6, Brahman 1.

(iii) Krishna Yajur Veda—*Dhyanbindu Upanishad*, verse nos. 55<sup>1/2</sup>-60, 95-100; *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse no. 28; *Amritnado-panishad*, verse no. 33-38; *Brahm Vidya Upanishad*, verse no. 17-19; *Yogshikha Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse no. 165-166, and Canto 5, verse no. 2; *Taittiriya Upanishad*, Valli 3, Anuvak 3, 7; *Kathopanishad*, Canto 2, Valli 2, verse no. 10; *Yog Kundalini Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse no. 2 (especially describes the three methods to control the Prans); *Pran Agnihotra Upanishad*, verse nos. 11-12, 14-17 (which describe the fingers that are directly related to the five principal winds and the Mantras of these winds).

(iv) Atharva Veda—*Annapurna Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 10 (that says that Pran controls all the activities of the body); Canto 4, verse nos. 42-43 (that say that the Chitta Vrittis inspire the Prans to become active), 85-89 (that say that control of Pran is equivalent to control of Vasanas, and briefly outline the methods by which Pran can be controlled ); Canto 5, verse nos. 25-32, 50-53 (its verse nos. 52-53 aver that for a self-realised ascetic, the terms Pran and consciousness are the same); *Prashna Upanishad*, Canto 2-3; *Mundak Upanishad*, Canto 3, section 1, verse no. 4; *Shandilya Upanishad*, Canto 1, section 4, verse no. 12-13; *Atma Upanishad*, verse no. 18 (says that the body is kept active by the vital winds); *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 2 (the 4 aspects of Pran; that Pran moves through four Naadis); *Bhavana Upanishad*, verse no. 2/21-25.

(v) These vital winds have also been elucidated upon in sage Veda Vyas' *Adhyatma Ramayan*, Aranya Kand, Canto 4, verse no. 38-39.

<sup>2</sup>For the purpose of study of this Upanishad, the terms mentioned in the eight steps of Yoga are briefly describes as follows—

(i) Yam\*—broadly meaning self restraint and it covers such virtues as non-violence (Ahinsa), honesty and truthfulness (Stya), abhorring theft (Asteya), abstinence, celibacy and detachment from passions (Brahmacharya), and non-accumulation and non-possession (Aparigraha).

(ii) Niyam\*—or observance of principles or codes of conduct in a religious pursuit. Such as having good habits and contentment, observing austerities and penances, self-study of scriptures, following a righteous, virtuous and noble way of life etc.

According to Skanda Puran, the 'Yam and Niyam' mentioned above are ten, and they have been described in Skanda Puran in these words:-

सत्यं क्षमाऽऽर्जवं ध्यानमातृशंस्यमहिंसनम् ॥ दमः प्रसादो माद्युर्यं मृदुतेति यमा दश ।  
शौचं स्नानं तपो दानं मौनेज्याध्ययनं व्रतम् ॥ उपोषणोपस्थदण्डौ दशौ ते नियमाः स्मृताः ॥ ॥  
(स्कन्दपु०, ब्रा० ध० मा० ५/१९-२१)

The ten 'Yams' are—truthfulness, forgiveness, simplicity, Dhyan (meditation, concentration of the mind), lack of cruelty (or presence of compassion and mercy), forsaking violence, restraint of mind and sense organs, pleasant demeanors and sweet towards all).

The ten 'Niyams' are—cleanliness/ablution, bath (purification of body), Tapa (austerities, penances, sufferings), alms and charities, keeping silence, Yagya (sacrifices, religious rituals), self study, observance of vows, keeping fasts, celibacy. (Skanda Puran, Bra. Dha. Ma. 5/19-21).

\*The 10 Yams and 10 Niyams—These have been described in (i) the Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Canto 5, verse nos 11-14; and (ii) the Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 1, sections 1-2.

(iii) Aasan—the various postures of the body adopted while doing Yoga or meditation. This is the physical aspect of Yoga. The various postures are designed to free the body from toxins, and they calm down the body as well as the mind which is trained to focus on Brahm or Atma, which is pure and infinite consciousness and a fount of light and enlightenment, instead of wandering aimlessly and getting entangled in a web of miseries and confusions represented by this world. Some of the Upanishads that describe the various Aasans are the following—(i) Shukla Yajur Veda = Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 35-52 describes seventeen Aasans; Mandal Brahmin, Brahman 1, section 1, verse no. 5. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda = Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 15-17; Yog Kundali, Canto 1, verse nos. 5-6; Yog Tattva, verse no. 29; Yog Shikha, Canto 1, verse no. 84. (iii) Sam Veda = Jabal Darshan Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-13. (iv) Atharva Veda = Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 3; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 87.

(iv) Pranayam—the control of the life-giving fresh breath or the vital wind force of life called Pran. It helps remove distractions and agitations of the mind, removes the various toxins present in the blood, opens up clogged veins and arteries, relaxes the nerves, and ultimately helps to elevate both the body and the mind. It activates and re-energises the battery of the body. The importance of Pranayam in Yoga can never be fully emphasised because it is the main tool of Yoga. Some of the Upanishads describing the process of Pranayam are the following—(i) Shukla Yajur Veda = Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad, 2/53, 2/92-120. (ii) Sam Veda = The entire Canto 5-6 of Jabal Darshan Upanishad; Yoga Chudamani. (iii) Krishna Yajur Veda = Brahm Vidya, verse nos. 21-22, 66-76, Dhyana Bindu, Yoga Kundali, Canto 1, verse nos. 19-62, Yoga Tattva, Yogshikha. (iv) Atharva Veda = Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 5, verse nos. 2-4; Canto 1, section 6, verse nos. 1-5; and Canto 1, section 7, verse nos. 1-13; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 87.

(v) Pratyahar—this is the state of withdrawal of the mind from agitations caused by the stimuli-inputs reaching it from the five sensory organs of perception of the body, which act like radars collecting various information from the outside world. With the lack of inputs, i.e. the radar going blank, the mind does not have to bother itself about the output, which is the control of the organs of action. Hence, it finds time and energy to relax and contemplate and ponder upon other more important matters of life such as the spiritual and ethereal rather than spending its energy in the humdrum, routine work of the world. The entire Canto 7 of Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda is devoted to this theme. Refer also to Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, section 8 which describes five types of Pratyahars.

(vi) Dharna—it means training of the mind to focus on one point; it is concentration of the mind as opposed to its constant state of being in a flux, always volatile and restless. It helps sharpen the intellect and empowers it with tremendous potentials like the rays of laser —precise, incisive, sharp, powerful, effective and surgical in nature. It also refers to firm conviction, belief and faith in the chosen path. The entire Canto 8 of Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda is devoted to this theme. Refer also to Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, section 9 which describes three types of Dharnas.

(vii) Dhyana—uninterrupted contemplation and meditation without an object used as a medium to concentrate the mind. The intention here is to heighten awareness of the pure-self and to establish oneness with the macro-soul of the cosmos. It results in the achievement of calmness, peace and tranquility. The practical benefit in life is the

calmness and serenity achieved by a seeker/aspirant during the process of Dhyān, and this calmness and tranquility spills over into all other aspects of life, thereby strengthening the emotional, intellectual and spiritual fabric of the creature. The entire Canto 9 of Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda is devoted to this theme. Refer also to Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, section 10 which describes two types of Dhyāns.

(viii) Samadhi—it is the final step and final stage of meditation, and it is a trance-like state of existence wherein the creature remains virtually awake in this world, but on a subtle plane he remains totally oblivious of the existence of the surrounding gross world. This Samadhi leads to bliss and happiness. In this state, the seeker/aspirant merges himself with the supreme Self, which is the real Truth and absolute Reality. Such people become truly enlightened souls who have developed union with their parent, the Brahm. The entire Canto 10 of Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda is devoted to this theme. Refer also to Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, section 11 which describes Samadhi in a succinct way.

All these limbs of Yoga work together in unison. The 1st five steps are mainly concerned with tuning the body and mind leading to its focus on the truth in the 6th and the 7th steps. The integration of the body, mind and soul into one spiritual whole, and removing of the barrier between the microcosmic Atma/soul of the individual and the macrocosmic Atma/soul of the cosmos is achieved, resulting in ultimate felicity and beatitude of the 8th step.

<sup>3</sup>The concept of non-duality between Brahm and Jiva has been established in a number of Upanishads, viz. Skanda Upanishad, verse no. 5; Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 70, 73; Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 56-58; Rudra Hridaya Upanishad; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 76-80.]

सत्त्वमथास्य पुरुषान्तःशिखोपवीतत्वम् । ब्राह्मणस्य मुमुक्षोरन्तःशिखोपवीतधारणम् ।  
बहिरलक्ष्यमाणशिखायज्ञोपवीतधारणं कर्मिणो गृहस्थस्य । अन्तरुपवीतलक्षणं तु  
बहिस्तनुवदव्यक्तमन्तस्तत्त्वमेलनम् ॥३॥

sattvamathāśya puruṣāntaḥ śikhopavītatvam /  
brāhmaṇasya mumukṣorantaḥ śikhopavītadhāraṇam /  
bahirlakṣyamāṇaśikhāyajñopavītadhāraṇam karmiṇo gr̥hasthasya /  
antarupavītalakṣaṇam tu bahistantuvadavyaktamantastattvamelanam // 3 //

3. For a truly Brahm and self realised person, the external symbols of Brahm such as the Yagyopavit (the sacred thread) and the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the head) are represented by and replaced by his internal awareness of the 'truth' as well as the purity and holiness of his inner-self.

A Brahmin (i.e. a learned person) who is desirous of Moksha (spiritual liberation, deliverance, salvation and emancipation) should wear the internal form of the sacred thread and the tuft of hair rather than their external variety.

The householder is expected to wear the external forms of the sacred thread and the tuft of hair.

[These two statements clearly imply that the internal form of sacred thread and tuft of hair is prescribed for Sanyasis or those who have entered the last stage of life and have renounced all attachments with the world (household). The wearing of the sacred thread is important only as long as a person is not enlightened enough to remain focused on the truth of Brahm and his pure self. It merely serves to remind him that the Lord resides in his own being as the Atma, and that by accepting to wear

the thread he has consented to follow the path of righteousness and auspiciousness, and therefore he should not do anything to the contrary. But this thread become redundant and superficial once enlightenment dawns upon the wearer and he remains focused on the thoughts that are truthful and holy. It is just like the case of a student needing to revise a subject till the time he has not mastered it, and after that he no longer needs any revision. It is also like the case of person needing to use soap and water only till the time his hands are unclean, for he does not need them if the hands are absolutely clean.

A householder is constantly engaged in the daily grind of life and the wearing of the sacred thread reminds him to be careful in his deeds and actions. For a Sanyasi this is not applicable as he has matured enough to be careful in a natural way.]

The internal form of the sacred thread and tuft of hair are not visible like their external counterparts. They are the ones which can help the spiritual aspirant attain Brahm which is also invisible. [External symbols of Brahm are gross, while internal symbols are subtle. The latter are the nearest analogue of Brahm, and therefore it is easier to access Brahm with their help.] (3).

[Note—Refer *Pahupata Brahm Upanishad*, Purva Kanda/Canto 1, verse no. 16-17.

*Yagyopavit*—References—(i) *Krishna Yajur Veda* = *Brahmo-panishad*, verse no. 4-15. (ii) *Atharva Veda* = *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse nos. 14-19, 27; *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse nos. 3-20; *Narad Parivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 17, 79, 80-82, 84-85, 88-89. The Mantra dedicated to the *Yagyopavit* is narrated in *Narad Parivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse no. 37.

The *Yagyopavit* or the ‘sacred thread’ is given to a Hindu child as part of his baptism rituals. It is a constant reminder to him as he grows up into an adult that he has certain moral obligations to live up to and certain basic standards that he must observe at all costs. He must be constantly on the vigil not to do anything that would undermine the authority and sanctity of this thread which acts as virtual string binding him to the vows of righteousness, auspiciousness and nobility in thought and action. It is his ‘sacred’ duty to uphold this path as laid down in the scriptures to which he had promised to adhere to at the time of his initiation or baptism. If he does not obey these rules and violates them in his life then what is the use of his wearing the *Yagyopavit* in the first place? It would be deceitful and cheating one’s self. This is precisely the point here. The sacred thread is only an external sign indicating that the wearer occupies a noble stature amongst men, but if he does not live up to the expectations from a man who wears this insignia of holiness and purity then he is only committing a grave sin as he is defiling the very principles upon which the institution of the sacred thread is based.

From the metaphysical and spiritual point of view, the *Yagyopavit* represents the supreme Brahm. When it is worn by a wise person it serves as a constant reminder to him that he is a personification of Brahm, and therefore he must never do anything that demeans this holy and divine institution. This philosophical interpretation of the sacred thread is the central theme in the present *Par Brahm Upanishad* which asserts unequivocally that the sacred thread is a symbol of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness and the universal Truth of creation.

The *Yagyopavit* consists of three interwoven threads, and it is therefore known as the *Trisutra*. It is worn around the neck or slung diagonally across the chest, from the left shoulder to the right side of the hip bone. The word *Sutra* in this term has great metaphysical meaning which has been described in the *Atharva Veda*’s *Narad Parivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 83-85.

The sacred thread is a symbol that stands at once for (i) Brahm represented by Pranav, the cosmic vibration or ethereal sound encapsulated in the word OM, (ii) for the Atma that is also known as Hans, the divine Swan, (iii) for the Fire, and (iv) for Gyan or truthful knowledge, wisdom, erudition and enlightenment about the Truth of

the self and Brahm. Refer: Atharva Veda = *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse nos. 14-19, 27; *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse nos. 3-14, 16-17.

The sacred thread symbolizes all the subtle aspects of creation, called the Tattwas. These Tattwas are variously said to number ninety-six, twenty-seven, nine etc., and the sacred thread encompasses all of them. It is, in fact, a representative of Brahm in entirety. These facts are explained in detail in the Atharva Veda's *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 5, and *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse no. 14-15. Great stress is laid in the Upanishads in getting deep into the hidden meaning of all things visible and understanding their essence and truth rather than being deluded by their external features. This is very evident in the case of the sacred thread where the Upanishad emphasizes that merely wearing the physical kind of the thread to get respect and material benefits in this world by being called a Brahmin (as they are the ones who wear it and are respected in society for their wisdom and high birth) is equivalent to cheating one's own self, and it would only lead to hell and give no real benefits. All external signs or symbols of Brahm-hood can hoodwink the world, but not the inner-self which does not benefit by external show of religiosity and holiness if its profound principles are not imbodyed by the spiritual aspirant. Thus, it is better to discard the external sacred thread and wear it symbolically in the inner-self by understanding who or what is Brahm and Atma. These facts are expressly asserted in *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse nos. 3-4, 6-20; *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse nos. 14-21, 26-27.

The *Shikha* is a tuft of hair on the top of the head. The metaphysical and spiritual importance and significance of the *Shikha* has been explained along with that of the sacred thread called the *Yagyopavit* in the present *Par Brahm Upanishad*, in its verse nos. 3, 5-20.

Its verse no. 13 says that the *Shikha* is as powerful and potent as the fire element. Verse no. 12 says that it is a symbol of Gyan or truthful knowledge. Verse no. 5 asserts that the *Shikha* stands for Karma (rituals, because it was an integral part for the performance of various sacred rites) as well as the knowledge of Brahm, and it also represents Hans (Brahm). This is because the area of the body where the *Shikha* is sported, viz. the top of the head, is also the site of Brahm as the latter had entered the body of the newly formed living being through the Brahm-Randhra, the hair-like slit on the top of the cranium, at the time of creation. Refer *Aiteryio Upanishad* of Rig Veda.]

न सन्नासन्न सदसिद्धन्नाभिन्नं न चोभयम् । न सभागं न निर्भागं न चाप्युभरूपकम् । ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वविज्ञानं हेयं मिथ्यात्वकारणादिति ॥४॥

na sannāsanna sadasadbhinnābhinnam na cobhayam /  
na sabhāgaṃ na nirbhāgaṃ na cāpyubhayarūpakam /  
brahmātmaikatvavijñānam heyaṃ mithyātvakāraṇāditi // 4 //

4. The real form of Brahm is not ascertainable. It neither can be defined with the term 'Satya' (truth) or with the term 'Asatya' (non-truth). It is neither different from either the Satya or the Asatya, nor is it a combination of both. [This idea is expressed by the Vedas when they proclaim that Brahm is 'Neti-Neti'—i.e. it is neither this nor that; it is not this, it is definitely not what it is being defined as. Therefore, Brahm is a term which incorporates all that exists in creation, the Satya as well as the Asatya, for the simple reason that nothing exists that is not Brahm.]

Brahm is such a unique entity that it cannot be said to have any parts or fractions or separable units, nor can it be said that it does not have units or parts because it is one indivisible whole. Similarly, it is neither something in between<sup>1</sup>.

Hence, only till the time one does not become aware of the truthful meaning and nature of Brahm that it is indefinable and incomprehensible, and that it is revealed in the form of the sublime and subtle Atma (i.e. the pure consciousness that resides invisibly in every living being or all the living aspects of creation) does one remain mired in ignorance and delusions about the truth of Brahm.

When one becomes enlightened about the truth and essence of Brahm, he discards all attempts to ascertain and know Brahm by its external and visible forms. Everything except the 'Truth' is false and impersonation. [This is why the external sacred thread and tuft of hair is to be abandoned by a self-realised Brahmin as asserted in verse no. 3.]

Since the real Truth that is 'absolute' can only be one and not more than one, it follows that Brahm, being the 'Absolute Truth' is always one and not more than one—i.e. Brahm is non-dual. Conversely, since Brahm is non-dual and universal in this creation, it follows that Brahm is also the 'Absolute Truth'. Either way, Brahm is not falsehood! (4).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The great paradoxes of Brahm have been outlined in the following Upanishads of the Atharva Veda: *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Uttar Kand/Canto 2, verse no. 43; *Atma Upanishad*, verse no. 31.]

पञ्चपाद्ब्रह्मणो न किञ्चन । चतुष्पादन्तर्वर्तिनोऽन्तर्जीवब्रह्मणश्चत्वारि स्थानानि । नाभिहृदयकण्ठमूर्धसु  
जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तितुरीयावस्थाः । आहवनीयगार्हपत्यदक्षिणसभ्याग्निषु । जागरिते ब्रह्मा स्वप्ने विष्णुः  
सुषुप्तौ रुद्रस्तुरीयमक्षरं चिन्मयम् । तस्माच्चतुरवस्था । चतुर्ङ्गुलवेष्टनमिव षण्णवतितत्त्वानि  
तन्तुवद्विभज्य तदाहितं त्रिगुणीकृत्य द्वात्रिंशत्तत्त्वनिष्कर्षमापाद्य ज्ञानपूतं त्रिगुणस्वरूपं त्रिमूर्तित्वं  
पृथग्विज्ञाय नवब्रह्माख्यनवगुणोपेतं ज्ञात्वा नवमानमितं त्रिःपुनस्त्रि गुणीकृत्य  
सूर्येन्द्वग्निकलास्वरूपत्वेनैकीकृत्याद्यन्तरेकत्वमपि मध्ये त्रिरावृत्य  
ब्रह्मविष्णुमहेश्वरत्वमनुसंधायाद्यन्तमेकीकृत्य चिद्ग्रन्थावद्वैतग्रन्थिं कृत्वा नाभ्यादिब्रह्म बिलप्रमाणं पृथक्  
पृथक् सप्तविंशतितत्त्वसंबन्धं त्रिगुणोपेतं त्रिमूर्तिलक्षणलक्षितं मध्येकत्वमापाद्य वामांसादिदक्षिणाकट्यन्तं  
विभाव्याद्यन्तग्रहसंमेलनमेवं ज्ञात्वा मूलमेकं सत्यं मृण्मयं विज्ञातं स्याद्वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं  
मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् । हंसेति वर्णद्वयेनान्तः शिखोपवीतित्वं निश्चित्य ब्राह्मणत्वं ब्रह्मध्यानार्हत्वं  
यतित्वमलक्षितान्तः शिखोपवीतित्वमेवं बहिर्लक्षितकर्मशिखाज्ञानोपवीतं गृहस्थस्याभासब्राह्मणत्वस्य  
केशसमूहशिखाप्रत्यक्षकार्पासतन्तुकृतोपवीतत्वम् । चतुः चतुर्गुणीकृत्य चतुर्विंशतितत्त्वापादनतन्तुकृत्त्वं  
नवतत्त्वमेकमेव परंब्रह्म तत्प्रतिसरयोग्यत्वाद्बहुमार्गप्रवृत्तिं कल्पयन्ति । सर्वेषां ब्रह्मादीनां देवर्षीणां  
मनुष्याणां मुक्तिरेका । ब्रह्मैकमेव । ब्राह्मणत्वमेकमेव । वर्णाश्रमाचारविशेषाः पृथक्पृथक् शिखा  
वर्णाश्रमिणामेकैव । अपवर्गस्य यतेः शिखायज्ञोपवीतमूलं प्रणवमेकमेव वदन्तिः । हंसः शिखा ।  
प्रणव उपवीतम् । नादः संधानम् । एष धर्मो नेतरो धर्मः । तत्कथमिति । प्रणवहंसो नादस्त्रिवृत्सूत्रं  
स्वहृदि चैतन्ये तिष्ठति त्रिविधं ब्रह्म । तद्विद्धि प्रापञ्चिकशिखोपवीतं त्यजेत् ॥५॥

pañcapādbrahmaṇo na kiṃcana /  
catuspādantarvartino'ntarjīvabrahmaṇaścātvāri sthānāni /  
nābhihṛdayakaṇṭhamūrdhasu jāgratsvapnasuṣuptituriyāvasthāḥ /  
āhavanīyagārhapatyadakṣiṇasabhyāgniṣu / jāgarite brahmā svapne viṣṇuḥ  
suṣuptau rudrasturīyamakṣaram cinmayam / tasmāccaturavasthā /



caturaṅgulaveṣṭanamiva śaṅṇavatitattvāni tantuvadvibhajya tadāhitam  
 triguṇīkṛtya dvātrimśattattvaniṣkarṣamāpādyā jñānapūtam triguṇasvarūpaṃ  
 trimūrtitvam prthagvijñāya navabrahmākhyānavagūṇopetaṃ jñātvā  
 navamānamitam triḥpunastri guṇīkṛtya  
 sūryendvagnikalāsvarūpatvenaikīkṛtyādyantarekatvamapi madhye  
 trirāvṛtya brahmaviṣṇumaheśvaratvamanuṣaṃdhāyādyantamekīkṛtya  
 cidgranthāvadvaitagranthiṃ kṛtvā nābhyādibrahma bilapramāṇam  
 prthak prthak saptaviṃśatitattvasaṃbandham triguṇopetaṃ  
 trimūrtilakṣaṇalakṣita mapyekatvamāpādyā vāmāṃsādidakṣiṇakanṭhyantaṃ  
 vibhāvādyantagrahasaṃmelanamevaṃ jñātvā mūlamekaṃ satyaṃ  
 mṛṇmayam vijñātam syādvācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam mṛttiketyeva  
 satyam / haṃseti varṇadvayenāntaḥśīkhopavītitvam niścītya brāhmaṇatvam  
 brahmadhyānārhatvam yatitvamaṇakṣitāntaḥ śīkhopavītitvamevaṃ  
 bahirlakṣitakarmaśīkhājñānopavītam gr̥hasthasyābhāsabrāhmaṇatvasya  
 keśasamūhaśīkhāpratyakṣakārpāsatanukṛtopavītatvam /  
 catuḥ caturguṇīkṛtya caturviṃśatitattvāpādanatanukṛttvam  
 navatattvamekameva paraṃbrahma  
 atpratisarayogyatvādbahumārgapravṛttiṃ kalpayanti /  
 sarveṣāṃ brahmādīnāṃ devarṣiṇāṃ manuṣyāṇāṃ mūrtirekā /  
 brahmaikameva / brāhmaṇatvamekameva / varṇāśramācāraviśeṣāḥ  
 prthakprthak śīkhā varṇāśramiṇāmekakaiva / apavargasya yateḥ  
 śīkhāyajñopavītamūlaṃ praṇavamekameva vadanti / haṃsaḥ śīkhā / praṇava  
 upavītam / nādaḥ saṃdhānam / eṣa dharmo netaro dharmāḥ / tat kathamiti /  
 praṇavahaṃso nādastrivṛtsūtram svahr̥di caitanye tiṣṭhati trividham brahma /  
 tadviddhi prāpañcikaśīkhopavītam tyajet // 5 //

5. Brahm having five Paads or aspects, known as the ‘Panch Paad Brahm’, is the one that is all-encompassing and all-including. Nothing escapes Brahm or falls outside its jurisdiction or purview. [The five aspects of Brahm are represented by the five states of consciousness—viz. the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Sushupta or the deep sleep state, the Turiya state or the earlier state of transcendental existence that comes beyond the Sushupta, and the Turiya-teet or the higher echelons of transcendental existence which is the climax of one’s spiritual achievement.]

Brahm is present both at the macrocosmic level of existence as well as the microcosmic level. It is therefore all-pervading, omnipresent, all-incorporating and all-encompassing. It is present uniformly in the entire creation, revealing itself in the body of the individual creature known as the Jiva as the latter’s Atma, the ‘pure conscious soul’ (refer the last stanzas of verse no. 2).

In the form of the Jiva, Brahm lives at four symbolic places—viz. the navel, the heart, the throat and the head. These are called the ‘four Paads of Brahm’ or the four seats where Brahm has revealed its ‘self’. This Brahm is known as the ‘Chatush Paad Brahm’<sup>1</sup>. [Refer verse no. 15.]

[In the navel region, Brahm reveals itself as the network of Naadis that have their origin here and are responsible for carrying sense perceptions throughout the body of the Jiva. In the heart, Brahm is revealed in the form of the Atma or pure consciousness that is said to reside in its subtle space called the Hridaya Akash. The heart is the only pumping station of the body which helps in circulation of the life-infusing blood throughout the body. The third spot, the throat, is where Brahm lives in the form of Pran or breath. It is the breath that keeps the body alive, and it is the throat

by which a man speaks and eats. Speech is a sound manifestation of the Brahm, and of course without eating no Jiva can survive as this aspect of Brahm is sustainer of creation by ingesting food and imbibing liquids for life. Finally, the head is the location of Brahm as it is here that the brain is located; it is the site of wisdom, erudition, intelligence, knowledge and sub-conscious and all other aspects associated with the mind that is the deemed revelation of Brahm's great ability to think and analyse.]

Brahm is attained in any of the four states of existence. That is, during the Jagrat or waking state, the Swapna or dreaming state, the Sushupta or the deep sleep state, the Turiya state or the earlier state of transcendental existence that comes beyond the Sushupta. A spiritual aspirant who has understood and become enlightened about Brahm in a holistic manner becomes aware of the truth that every single phase of existence, whether it is gross or subtle, is a manifestation or a revelation of Brahm. If this is true then all the four states of existence of consciousness are also one or the other forms of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness. It is true because in all these phases or aspects of creation, it is the same 'consciousness' that pervades and plays the pivotal role. If there is no consciousness, there is no life, and therefore the question of 'existence' of any sort of world, whether it is of the gross type or of the subtle type, does not arise. A dead entity is not affected by whether the world is real or it is imaginary in one's dream. Therefore, a truly self and Brahm realised man sees the same Brahm as prevailing in the Jagrat state, in the Swapna state, in the Sushupta state, and the Turiya state. For him, each and every phase or aspect of existence is Brahm in that form; it is Brahm that manifests in that form.

Brahm is also revealed in the form of the Fire having four aspects, viz. the Ahawaniya, Garhapatya, Dakshina, and Sabhya<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, a wise man should develop the metaphysical wisdom whereby he sees these fires as manifestations of the Atma in the sense that just like the Atma, which is the pure consciousness which infuses life in this otherwise lifeless and gross world, these fires too inject life in this creation in the form of energy, heat, light and dynamism. Obviously, no life is imaginable and tenable without the 'fire'. The fire, in its different forms, is a manifestation of the dynamism, energy, heat, light, vitality and other vital ingredients of the life-infusing and life-sustaining abilities of Brahm. The fire embodies the eclectic virtues of purity and the ability of Brahm to burn all impurities in this creation, to purify the world by purging all the impure, and to eliminate darkness by its self-effusing illumination. The fire, in effect, is a personified form of these grand virtues that mark the eclectic glory and characteristic divine qualities of Brahm.

The supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm is represented by Brahma the creator during the Jagrat state, by Vishnu during the Swapna state, by Rudra during the Sushupta state, and by the primary form of eternal Consciousness during the Turiya state.

[During the waking state known as the Jagrat state, the creature is aware of the physical world and is engaged in its activities just like the creator Brahma who is perpetually engaged in the process of creation, evolution and growth of this physical world. In iconography, Brahma the creator is depicted as having four heads facing the four directions of the compass. It is a symbolic way of saying that Brahma is alert and receptive to all that is happening in all the four corners of this creation; he remains wide awake to learn about the developments in all spheres of life in this creation. This state of existence of Brahma corresponds well to the Jagrat state when the organs of the creature who is awake remain ever vigilant towards their respective objects in this

world—e.g. the eye is ready to see things, the ear is ready to hear, the tongue is ready to taste and speak, the skin is ready to feel, and the nose is ready to smell.]

Vishnu, on the other hand, is depicted in the scriptures as lying in a reclining state of Yog-Nidra, which is a state of virtual sleep as is observed by ascetics during meditation, to indicate Vishnu's deep concentration and his remaining submerged in the thoughts of finding means and ways to keep the creation sustained and happy. He remains aloof from the physical activities of the gross world unless he is required to actually intervene in the form of various incarnations. But this visibly sleeping mode of Vishnu doesn't mean that he is not involved in the affairs of the world—for the Lord is engaged in the thoughts of the world at the subtle level of existence, and constantly devising methods to deal with the ever-changing requirements of the equally ever-changing world. Vishnu is said to represent the dreaming state of consciousness, called the Swapna state, when the consciousness remains very much active, but this activity is of a subtle nature rather than of the gross sort as represented by the Jagrat state that Brahma, the creator, stands for. While Brahma is depicted with eyes fully open symbolizing the waking state of consciousness, Vishnu is depicted with eyes shut close like when a man sleeps to symbolize the dreaming state of consciousness.

[Vishnu is not actually sleeping, but he is 'dreaming' of the imaginary world that he himself has created in his more sublime and subtle form as the Viraat Purush. The Viraat Purush is the all-encompassing and all-pervading cosmic gross body of Brahm, and it is from this Viraat that the rest of the creation, including Brahma, has come into being.]

Dream is a state of the mind when it can achieve stupendous and most astounding things that are not possible for it to achieve in the waking state of reality. Dream lends wings to the imaginative mind to create things out of nothing, something that is not feasible in the background of the harsh realities of the waking state. Since this creation is imagined by the Viraat Purush, since this world is a 'creation' of the Viraat Purush, it is said that the latter's other form known as Vishnu rests in the dreaming state of consciousness because it is in one's dreams that one can imagine of things that do not actually exist.]

Rudra refers to Lord Shiva who remains perpetually blissful and in a state of deep meditation. He is the patron God of ascetics. This is why he is represented by the deep sleep state known as Sushupta. [Like the ascetics, Rudra too remains in a perpetual state of meditation which results in his remaining in a state of blissfulness.]

Finally, there is the Turiya state which goes beyond the Sushupta state when the sleeping creature experiences utmost bliss which is perpetual and not interrupted by coming back to the waking state once again. It is sort of permanent Sushupta. During this state, the truthful character of the Atma is revealed, i.e. one feels bliss and ecstasy. It is a transcendental state of existence that is equivalent to the state of Samadhi, a spiritual state when the person is not aware of the surrounding world in spite of his being awake in it and going about his duties in a normal way externally, but remaining aloof from everything internally. ]

Now, the symbolism of the sacred thread is being discussed because a true Sanyasi (a renunciate ascetic) is expected to wear this thread as a symbol of his attaining Brahm-hood.

The four states of existence as well as the four Paads of Brahm are represented by the four fingers that are used to weave the sacred thread as well as to sling the physical thread across the shoulder of the wearer.

All the ninety-six elements of creation<sup>3</sup> are equally divided into three divisions and metaphorically incorporated in the three strands that are intertwined to constitute the sacred thread. Therefore, each strand symbolically stands for thirty-two elements. [96 / 3 = 32.]

Similarly, these three strands symbolize the three basic Gunas that determine the fundamental character of all units of creation (i.e. Sata Guna, Raja Guna and Tama Guna), the three invisible forms of Brahm known as the Trinity Gods at the macrocosmic level (i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva which have these three Gunas as their dominant characteristics—refer Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 10), and the three visible forms of Brahm at the celestial level such as the sun, the moon and the fire. These three aspects of Brahm are intertwined with one another; they cannot be separated one from the other in order to maintain the texture of the fabric of creation intact. Hence, these represent the twenty-seven elements or Tattwas of creation that the sacred thread represents. [3 x 3 x 3 = 27.]

So, though the sacred thread actually consists of three individual strands, but they are so much an indivisible and inseparable part of it that when one talks of the sacred thread, all the strands and the entities that they represent are deemed to be included in the meaning.

Therefore, when the sacred thread is worn on the body with the aforesaid wisdom, slung across the chest from the left shoulder to the right side of the hip joint, the wearer is able to cleanse his mind of all delusions and ignorance regarding the metaphysical importance and spiritual benefits of wearing it. He begins to assign deep meaning to the sacred thread instead of it being just worn as matter of routine or because it is traditionally regarded as the proper thing to wear it. Wearing it without understanding the hidden metaphysical significance and spiritual importance of the sacred thread would be an exercise in futility as far as Brahm realisation is concerned. [Refer also to Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 25.]

It must be clearly understood that inspite of the sacred thread representing so many various aspects of Tattwas (elements of creation), the basic Tattwa (essence; element) is only 'one', and this Tattwa is nothing but 'Brahm' for the simple reason that all the Tattwas are one or the other aspect of the cosmic divine entity that is unquestionably single, immutable and non-dual—though of course it has taken so many varied forms and shapes that they defy comprehension. This can be explained with the instance of the pots and pans made of clay. Just like the case of these pots and pans made of clay having 'clay' as their fundamental element inspite of the diversity of their shapes, colours and sizes, whatever that exists in this creation is Brahm, and nothing but Brahm. [Here, the 'clay' is the fundamental element known as the Tattwa, while the various forms that it takes is equivalent to the various forms that the elements have taken, numbering ninety-six, thirty-two, twenty-seven etc., or as the various Gunas, Gods and celestial bodies that exist in this vast and colourful creation of astounding diversity and variety, whether in a visible form or in the invisible form.]

Hence, the true wearing of the sacred thread is when the spiritual aspirant is enlightened about the fact that he is a personification of the supreme Brahm represented by the Hans (the divine Swan) present in his inner-self as the Atma, the pure consciousness. This enlightenment is the symbolic wearing of the sacred thread internally. This eclectic thought helps one to attain the exalted stature of Brahm-realisation. The real sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the head of such enlightened and realised spiritual aspirants are not physically visible on their bodies (because they discard external signs of Brahm, and convert them into symbols of internal wisdom

and enlightenment). These two signs of Brahm (i.e. the sacred thread and the tuft of hair) become an integral part of their inner-self, their personality.

The outer sign of the Shikha (tuft of hair) which represents Karma (rituals, because it was an integral part for the performance of various sacred rites) and the Yagyopavit (sacred thread) which represents Gyan (knowledge, as it was worn at the time of the initiation ceremony of a disciple who resided with his teacher to learn the scriptures) are to be worn by householders only. The tuft of hairs and the sacred thread made of yarn are only signs that a particular person is eligible to perform religious duties and sacred rites (such as the fire sacrifices). That is all. Actually, the sacred thread symbolizes Brahm in its entirety, including the ninety-six Tattwas or fundamental elements in which this Brahm has revealed itself<sup>3</sup>.

Some sacred threads constitute of nine strands. [Refer Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 27.] They also stand for the nine Tattwas or revelations of Brahm<sup>4</sup>.

[The sacred thread has three main strands, and each of these further has other finer sub-strands. All of them are intricately intertwined with each other so much so that it is impossible to separate one from the other. This means that the elements created by Brahm do not have any independent value or existence in the context of creation; once they are integrated in the fabric of creation they all lose their individuality and become an integral part of creation. So, when a wise and erudite person attempts to understand the secrets of Brahm and this creation, he cannot compartmentalize them or segregate them into different sections. If he is to be truly Brahm-realised then he must have a holistic view of creation to understand the concept of Brahm.]

Brahm is only one, but many people devise many paths for attaining this Brahm. For all wise ones, whether they are learned Brahmins, great Brahm-rishis (sages and seers who have become Brahm-realised) or other men of wisdom and enlightenment known as Gyanis, the concepts of Mukti (spiritual liberation and deliverance; emancipation and salvation), Brahm (the cosmic Consciousness, the existential Truth, the Supreme Being) and Brahmin-hood or Brahm-realisation are one and the same. They are like the three intertwined strands making up the sacred thread. That is, these three things mean the same thing.

[In other words, when one becomes Brahm-realised he is deemed to have obtained Mukti and known the Truth. If one knows the Truth, it is deemed that he is Brahm-realised and has attained Mukti. Similarly, when one attains Mukti, it is deemed that he is Brahm-realised and known the Truth. When applied to the sacred thread which is regarded as a symbol of Brahm, the analogy means that the three strands which constitute this thread correspond to Mukti, Truth and Brahm-realisation.

In other words, when one has achieved success in attaining these three aspects of spiritualism, he is deemed to be a personified form of Brahm, the Supreme Being himself. Again, it means that these three aspects of metaphysics go hand-in-hand and cannot be divorced from one another if one is to attain the exalted stature that is as divine and holy as Brahm.]

The various Varnas and Ashrams are independent of each other. Their laws and doctrines are separate from one another. But the philosophy of the tuft of hair and the sacred thread applies uniformly to them as it is a universal truth applicable across the spectrum of creation.

[The Varnas are the four segments of society, such as the Brahmins or the learned class, the Kshatriyas or the warrior class, the Vaishyas or the trading class,

and the Shudras or the serving class, each having its own codes of conduct that regulate life in each of these classes in society. Similarly, there are four Ashrams in the society in which the life of a man is divided, each having its own laws and codes of conduct—viz. the Brahmcharya Ashram when a person studies, the Grihastha Ashram which is the householder phase when he marries, raises a family and attends to his worldly duties, the Vaanprastha Ashram when he hands over the responsibilities of his worldly affairs to his heirs and retires from active participation in the affairs of the mundane world, and the Sanyas Ashram when he totally renounces the world and spends the rest of life and time as a hermit or recluse, striving to attain final liberation and deliverance for his soul.]

For an ascetic who seeks Mukti, the tuft of hair and the sacred thread are represented by the ‘Pranav’ and the Mantra ‘OM’ respectively. For them, the true knowledge of the Hans (Brahm) is the symbolic way of sporting the physical tuft of hair on the top of the head, and the Mantra OM representing the Pranav (Brahm) is the symbolic way of wearing the sacred thread.

[Refer also to Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 12-22; Canto 2, verse nos. 1-3, 5-7 in this context.

The Pranav is the cosmic Consciousness that generates vibrations in ether, which in turn creates the cosmic sound known as Naad. Hence, Pranav and Brahm are synonymous with one another. OM is the word equivalent of Pranav; it is the name given to the Supreme Being known as Brahm like any name consisting of letters that is given to any particular person in order to distinguish him from all others.

Hans is a personified form of Brahm or Pranav. Brahm is the Supreme Being, so he occupies the highest seat in creation. In the context of the body of a creature, the highest point is the head; it is here that Brahm has his seat and abode. The term ‘Hans’ when used for Brahm implies that the latter is most holy, pure and wise because this bird is employed universally in the scriptures to denote these grand and eclectic virtues in any creature. Further, wisdom, discrimination, erudition, sagacity and intelligence are virtues of the brain (mind), and the brain is located in the head. So, in brief, the tuft of hair that is also located on the top of the head is deemed to be a symbol of Pranav or Brahm.

Now we come to OM as a representative of the sacred thread. The word OM has three letters—‘A’, ‘U’ and ‘M’. These three letters stand for the three strands of the sacred thread. Even as none of these individual letters have any relevance if taken independently but assume a divine connotation when taken together as OM, the three strands of the sacred thread have no significance if taken individually but assume a holy meaning when taken together.

From the view-point of the teaching of this great Upanishad it means that in order to have a comprehensive knowledge of Brahm one should not attempt to understand something as esoteric and enigmatic as Brahm by adopting a biased or lop-sided view of creation. One should not attempt to understand Brahm by limiting one’s study to any one facet or angle of creation vis-à-vis Brahm, but one must realise that Brahm can only be attained, accessed, understood, witnessed or realised if a comprehensive, a holistic and an all-inclusive approach is adopted. Otherwise, it would be like observing an object by the medium of a viewing mirror that is either unclean or splintery and fractured.

The gross body of the ascetic who wears the sacred thread becomes as holy and pure as the gross body of the bird Swan (Hans). But his ‘true self’ is not this gross body but the divine Atma, the pure consciousness that is equivalent to Brahm, the

cosmic Consciousness. Brahm is also said to be a Hans because of its purity, wisdom, immaculacy and holiness.]

The Naad (which is the cosmic sound that is generated in ether by the vibrations caused by the cosmic Consciousness known as Pranav) helps to establish a union between the ascetic and the supreme Brahm during Yoga.

[This is because the cosmic sound that is heard by the ascetic in the higher stages of meditation when his repetition of OM reaches a crescendo and culminates in his nerves and veins resonating with this sound, he experiences extreme thrill and ecstasy. All impulses originating from the external world cease to be registered by his brain (mind and sub-conscious) so much so that he would remain in a state of suspended animation vis-à-vis this material world of sense objects. This translates into his being in a transcendental state of existence that is obtained during the Turiya state. Hence, OM leads one to the Turiya state of transcendental existence when there is no difference between the Hans represented by the Atma or the individual 'self' of the ascetic, and the Hans represented by the supreme Brahm. They become one and the same.

When the ascetic meditates using the OM Mantra, the vibrations generated inside his body by constant repetition of OM coincide with the vibration generated in the ether by the cosmic Consciousness outside his body. When the two vibrations overlap with each other or coalesce with each other, the ascetic is able to experience oneness between the two types of vibrations—which means he begins to experience oneness between his own Atma and Brahm known as the supreme transcendental cosmic Atma. ]

Now, the concept of the OM and Hans is applied to the sacred thread. The wearer of the sacred thread is the Hans or the truthful 'self' of the creature known as the Atma. The three letters of OM (i.e. A, U and M) represent the three strands of the sacred thread. Since OM represents Pranav or Brahm, it follows that the true wearer of this symbolic sacred thread lives in the heart because the Atma, represented by the metaphoric Hans, lives in the subtle heart of the creature. This Atma is pure consciousness.

Hence, Brahm has two manifestations—viz. one is the all-pervading cosmic form known as Pranav, and the other is the one that lives inside the individual as his Atma.

When one has become wise and enlightened enough to see nothing but the all-pervading 'consciousness' known as the Atma everywhere, he should discard the external forms of the sacred thread and the tuft of hair (5).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>These four points in the body are also mentioned in the Brahm Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse no. 1.

These are the four sites are also where the four important *Chakras*, or the whirling circles of cosmic energy inside the body of the creature, are located. It is believed that these Chakras have trapped divine mystical energy which can be unleashed by means of Yoga, and once released they enable the aspirant acquire mystical powers that are rare and very potential. These four Chakras are called respectively the Nabhi Chakra, the Hridaya Chakra, the Kanth Chakra and the Brahm Randhra Chakra.

The *four Paads of Brahm* are narrated in the following Upanishads also—(i) Sam Veda's Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 3, section 18, verse nos. 2-6, Canto 4, Section 5, verse no. 2, Canto 4, Section 6, verse no. 3, Canto 4, Section 7, verse no. 3, and Canto 4, Section 8, verse no. 3. (ii) Krishna Yajur Veda's Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 1. (iii) Atharva Veda's Mandukya Upanishad, verse nos. 3-7; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 4-7; Tripadvibhut Maha-Narayan

Upanishad, Canto 1, paragraph 5; Canto 4, paragraph nos. 1-3, 6; Canto 8, paragraph no. 8; Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 5-8.

The *difference* between the three Paads of Brahm (known as the Tripadvibhut Brahm) and its fourth Paad is explained in form of an inverted pyramid in the *Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 4, paragraph no. 4.

<sup>2</sup>The four holy fires are ‘Garhyapatya’ which is the fire of the household hearth; the main fire of the formal fire sacrifice; the fire that every householder is supposed to keep alive and worship regularly and from which the first spark is taken for the rituals associated with religious ceremonies), (b) ‘Dakshinagni’ which is the fire used as a witness to making charities or any other religious festivity; the fire lit at the site of a sacrificial fire ritual, near its south end), (c) ‘Ahawaniya’ is the fire lit to invoke the Gods, to invite them to participate and accept the offerings made to them during a ritualistic fire sacrifice), and (d) ‘Sabhya’ refers to the fire of the Vedic period which was continuously lit).

The Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, in its Canto 2, verse no. 2 says that there are the following four sacred fires and they have their origin from the four aspects or syllables or letters of the divine Mantra OM as follows—the Garhyapatya fire has its origin in the first letter ‘A’, Dakshinagni has its origin in the second letter ‘U’, Ahawaniya fire has its origin in the third letter ‘M’, and Samvartak fire has its origing in the last part of OM which is a half-syllable called the Ardha Matra.

<sup>3</sup>The ninety six elements have been narrated in great detail in the Krishna Yajur Veda’s Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 2-14. Refer also to the Atharva Veda’s Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 14.

<sup>4</sup>The Pashupata Brahm Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse no. 14 says that there are nine Tattvas which are actually subtle revelations of the supreme Brahm. They are the following—The three fundamental Gunas, i.e. the Sata, the Raja and the Tama, the three basic characters of the Atma known as Sat-Chit-Anand, i.e. Sat (truth), Chitta (consciousness) and Anand (bliss), and the three forms of divinity represented by the Trinity Gods, i.e. Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Rudra the concluder of creation, represent the nine Tattwas of creation.]

सशिखं वपनं कृत्वा बहिःसूत्रं त्यजेद्बुधः । यदक्षरं परंब्रह्म तत्सूत्रमिति धारयेत् ॥६॥

saśikhaṃ vapanam kṛtvā bahiḥsūtram tyajebudhaḥ /  
yadakṣaram parambrahma tatsūtramiti dhārayet // 6 //

6. Those who are wise and enlightened should cut off their Shikha (tuft of hair on the top of the head) and discard the external form of the Sutra (the sacred thread). Instead, they should accept the imperishable and eternal Brahm in place of the Sutra (6).

पुनर्जन्मनिवृत्त्यर्थं मोक्षस्याहर्निशं स्मरेत् । सूचनात्सूत्रमित्युक्तं सूत्रं नाम परं पदम् ॥७॥

punarjanmanivṛtyartham mokṣasyāharniśam smaret /  
sūcanātsūtramityuktaṃ sūtram nāma param padam // 7 //

7. In order to find freedom from the thread (fetter) of bondage that forces a creature to take birth again, a wise man should take the aid of the thread represented by Brahm.



In other words, he should take the recourse of truthful knowledge and spiritual enlightenment in order to break free from the cycle of re-birth and death.

Since the thread is an indication of both the worldly fetters as well as Brahm, it is wise for a man to interpret its meaning correctly and use it correctly in order to achieve success in Brahm-realisation and attaining Mukti or spiritual freedom and deliverance (7).

तत्सूत्रं विदितं येन स मुमुक्षुः स भिक्षुकः । स वेदवित्सदाचारः स विप्रः पंक्तिपावनः ॥८॥

tatsūtram viditam yena sa mumukṣuḥ sa bhikṣukaḥ /  
sa vedavitsadācāraḥ sa vipraḥ paṅktipāvanaḥ // 8 //

8. A person who has understood the real and true import of the term 'Sutra' (literally the sacred thread as well as the formula that unfolds the path of Brahm-realisation) is the one who is eligible to attain Moksha (spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation), is a true Bhikshuk (a monk, a mendicant or a friar), is truly a Vedagya (one who is an expert in the Vedas and their tenets), is Sadachari (one who follows the path of truth and auspiciousness), and is a Vipra (a Brahmin; a learned and elderly man).

Such a man is not only holy and pure himself but also makes holy and pure those with whom he comes in contact. He is regarded with the greatest respect in the line of people who are mendicants (8).

येन सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव । तत्सूत्रं धारयेद्योगी योगविद्ब्राह्मणो यतिः ॥९॥

yena sarvamidaṁ protaṁ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva /  
tatsūtram dhārayedyogī yogavidbrāhmaṇo yatīḥ // 9 //

9. The supreme transcendental Brahm who is the thread that has knitted together all the units of creation and holds them in place like beads in a rosary or a garland, the ascetic who wears this sacred thread (i.e. who accepts Brahm as the basic essence of creation and honours Brahm exclusively) is indeed said to be an expert ascetic who is well-versed in the philosophy of Yoga (9).

बहिःसूत्रं त्यजेद्विप्रो योगविज्ञानतत्परः । ब्रह्मभावमिदं सूत्रं धारयेद्यः स मुक्तिभाक् । नाशुचित्वं न चोच्छिष्टं तस्य सूत्रस्य धारणात् ॥१०॥

bahiḥsūtram tyajedvipro yogavijñānatatparaḥ /  
brahmabhāvamidaṁ sūtram dhārayedyaḥ sa muktibhāk /  
nāśucitvaṁ na cocchiṣṭaṁ tasya sūtrasya dhāraṇāt // 10 //

10. A Brahmin (a learned man), an expert ascetic who is well-versed in Yoga, and a person who is a Gyani (a person who is wise, learned and enlightened) should abandon the external sacred thread, because the real thread that bestows spiritual liberation and deliverance is not the external thread made of a gross material (e.g.

cotton thread or silk thread) but the symbolic sacred thread representing Brahm that is worn (accepted) internally.

When the sacred thread representing Brahm is symbolically worn internally, there is no fear of it ever getting defiled or polluted; it would be permanently holy and pure (10).

सूत्रमन्तर्गतं येषां ज्ञानयज्ञोपवीतिनाम् । ते तु सूत्रविदो लोके ते च यज्ञोपवीतिनः ॥११॥

sūtramantargataṃ yeṣāṃ jñānayajñopavītinām /  
ye tu sūtravido loke te ca yajñopavītiṇaḥ // 11 //

11. Those who wear the sacred thread after fully understanding its metaphysical importance and spiritual significance, those who have realised that this sacred thread represents Brahm in its entirety are the ones who wear it in the true sense, and therefore are eligible for the benefits that accrue by wearing it. [For the rest, it is merely a formality that can fool the world into believing that the wearer is a holy man, and nothing more. It would not serve them any real purpose, except worldly praise.] (11).

ज्ञानशिखिनो ज्ञाननिष्ठा ज्ञानयज्ञोपवीतिनः । ज्ञानमेव परं तेषां पवित्रं ज्ञानमीरितम् ॥१२॥

jñānaśikhino jñānaniṣṭhā jñānayajñopavītiṇaḥ /  
jñānameva paraṃ teṣāṃ pavitraṃ jñānamīritam // 12 //

12. Those who wear the Shikha and the Sutra as symbols of Gyan (truthful knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment which kindles spiritual awakening and truth-realisation) regard Gyan as the best thing in this world to acquire and aim for. This is because Gyan is the holiest and the purest thing in this world. [It shows the correct path to the aspirant, and never misleads him for some vested self-interest.] (12).

अग्नेरिव शिखा नान्या यस्य ज्ञानमयी शिखा । स शिखीत्युच्यते विद्वान्नेतरे केशधारिणः ॥१३॥

agneriva śikhā nānyā yasya jñānamayī śikhā /  
sa śikhītyucyate vidvānnetare keśadhāriṇaḥ // 13 //

13. Those who are wise and enlightened assert that those persons who understand that the Shikha (tuft of hair on the head) is as powerful and potent as the fire element itself are the ones who are true wearers of it. For the rest, they are merely sporting a crop of hair on the head, and nothing more (13).

कर्मण्यधिकृता ये तु वैदिके लौकिकेऽपि वा । ब्राह्मणाभासमात्रेण जीवन्ते कुक्षिपूरकाः । व्रजन्ते निरयं ते तु पुनर्जन्मनि जन्मनि ॥१४॥

karmaṇyadhikṛtaḥ ye tu vaidike laukike'pi vā /

brāhmaṇābhāsamātreṇa jīvante kukṣipūrakāḥ /  
vrajante nirayaṃ te tu punarjanmani janmani // 14 //

14. Those Brahmins who are engrossed merely in performing rituals and observing sacraments, or who are engaged in the mundane affairs of the world are Brahmins only for name's sake (and not true Brahmins), because they live only to fill their stomachs and enjoy the fame, comforts and pleasures that come with worldly respect. Such people go to hell at the end of their lives.

[That is, they continue to take birth and die again, and during each life they undergo sufferings and miseries that are part and parcel of gross mundane existence. They do not find Mukti or spiritual liberation and deliverance, nor do they find peace and bliss that comes with self and Brahm realisation. They do not have true Gyan, and are only pretending to have it by studying the scriptures in order to fulfill their worldly desires and gain fame and pecuniary benefits. In short, they are not true Brahmins, they are imposters, and they do not do justice to the institution of Brahm-hood. They give the holy stature of being a Brahmin a bad name.

The question arises, who then is a true Brahmin?<sup>1</sup> The answer is self-evident in the foregoing as well as the following verses. That is, only those who have true knowledge of Brahm, and the depth of wisdom and enlightenment to understand what the term 'Brahm' is all about, who do not hanker after external purity and formalities but lay stress on inner cleansing and sincerity of purpose are true Brahmins. Such people would not be much bothered about sporting a tuft on the head or wearing the sacred thread to prove that they are Brahmins, but would instead strive to inculcate the glorious virtues that are so typical of those who have become self and Brahm realised, who have really understood the truth and reality of things.] (14).

[Note—<sup>1</sup>The salient features of Brahmins are the following—they should possess these noble qualities—(1) 'Riju'-be expert in the Rig and the Yajur Vedas, (2) 'Tapa'-should be involved in doing penances, observing austerities and enduring sufferings for the welfare of the soul and the society, (3) 'Santosh'-be contented and satisfied, (4) 'Kshamaa'-to be forgiving and tolerant, (5) 'Sheel'-to have such virtues as good character, dignity, decorum and virtuousness, (6) 'Jitendriya'-to have self control over the sense organs, (7) 'Data'-to be a giver, one who sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of others, (8) 'Gyani'-one who is well learned, wise, enlightened and erudite, (9) 'Dayaalu'-to be merciful and compassionate. [Shatpath Brahman.]

An entire Upanishad called Vajra-shuchiko-panishad, belonging to the Sam Veda tradition is devoted to the subject. The eclectic virtues of Brahmins have been expounded in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahman 5 as well as in Canto 3, Brahman 8, verse no. 10.

The Pashupata Brahm Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse no. 19 describes who a true Brahmin.]

वामांसदक्षकट्यन्तं ब्रह्मसूत्रं तु सव्यतः । अन्तर्बहिरिवात्यर्थं तत्त्वतन्तुसमन्वितम् ।  
नाभ्यादिब्रह्मरन्ध्रान्तप्रमाणं धारयेत्सुधीः ॥५॥

vāmāṃsadakṣakaṇṭhyantaṃ brahmasūtraṃ tu savyataḥ /  
antarbahirivātyarthaṃ tattvatantusamanvitam /  
nābhyādibrahmarandhrāntapramāṇaṃ dhārayetsudhīḥ // 15 //

15. It is advisable for a learned person to wear the Brahm Sutra (the sacred thread symbolizing Brahm) slung across the chest from the left shoulder to the right side of the hip joint. This is how it should be worn physically on the gross body.

Internally, a wise man must realise that the Sutra (the basic essence; the elementary truth) of the sacred thread is 'Brahm' which is the supreme transcendental Consciousness and the only Truth of creation. He should accept this Brahm and symbolically wear the Brahm Sutra internally from the region of the navel to the top of the head where the Brahm-Randhra is situated.

[Refer verse no. 5. The reason for selecting this region of the body is that Brahm, in the form of the life-infusing consciousness, is present at four locations in the body—viz. the navel, the heart, the throat and the head.

Besides this, the central part of the body is where all the major functional organs are located—viz. the liver, the kidney, the heart, the intestines, the pancreas, the gall bladder, the reproductive organs etc. Each has its specific function and represents one or the other aspect of Brahm who has literally assumed the form of these organs to carry out the designated duty or function in creation. In the cosmic scale Brahm carries out his duties and functions in the form of the different Gods and elements of Nature, and in the microcosmic plane of creation when the same Brahm took up residence in the creature's body as his Atma, his pure conscious soul, Brahm created these organs to help the Atma carry on with its desired objectives in this world.

If Brahm can create the sun and the earth, if Brahm can create the sky, the air, the fire and the water, then there is no surprise in Brahm creating the various organs of the body in which he (Brahm) can live as the Atma. It is the same Consciousness that empowers the elements to carry on their functions at the cosmic level of creation that also empowers these organs to carry on with their functions in the body of the individual creature who is, in effect, the creation in a miniature form.] (15).

तेभिर्धार्यमिदं सूत्रं क्रियाङ्गं तन्तुनिर्मितम् । शिखा ज्ञानमयी यस्य उपवीतं च तन्मयम् । ब्राह्मण्यं सकलं तस्य नेतरेषां तु किञ्चन ॥१६॥

tebhir dhāryamidaṃ sūtraṃ kriyāṅgaṃ tantunirmitam /  
śikhā jñānamayī yasya upavītaṃ ca tanmayam /  
brāhmaṇyaṃ sakalaṃ tasya netareṣāṃ tu kiṃcana // 16//

16. In this way, a wise man should wear the Brahm Sutra composed of the supreme essence of creation as well as of all spiritual endeavours known as Brahm.

A person for whom the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the head) and the Upvit (the sacred thread) are symbols of Gyan (true knowledge, high wisdom, enlightenment and self-realisation), everything is a personification or an embodiment of Brahm, and nothing else (16).

इदं यज्ञोपवीतं तु परमं यत्परायणम् । विद्वान्यज्ञोपवीती संधारयेद्यः स मुक्तिभाक् ॥१७॥

idaṃ yajñopavītaṃ tu paramaṃ yatparāyaṇam /  
vidvānyajñopavīti saṃdhārayedyah sa muktibhāk // 17 //

17. A person who knows the esoteric secrets, spiritual importance and metaphysical significance of the Yagyopavit (sacred thread) is the one who can be said to truly wearing it, and therefore is entitled to the benefits that accrue by wearing it. For instance, he is entitled to Mukti or spiritual liberation and deliverance (17).

बहिरन्तश्चोपवीती विप्रः संन्यस्तुमर्हति । एकयज्ञोपवीती तु नैव संन्यस्तुमर्हति ॥१८॥

bahirantaścopavīti vipraḥ saṁnyastumarhati /  
ekayajñopavīti tu naiva saṁnyastumarhati // 18 //

18. A Vipra (Brahmin) who wears both the external as well as the internal forms of the sacred thread is actually eligible to take the vows of Sanyas (a life of total renunciation).

[By wearing the external thread he would be spending his routine life in an auspicious and righteous manner because he would be obliged to follow the dignified way of life expected of him by the virtue of his wearing the thread. He cannot do anything unrighteous because that would immediately invite scorn and ridicule from the society and make him outcaste. He would fulfill all his worldly obligations and responsibilities in a proper manner. All this while, he would be internally detached and dispassionate from what his external gross body is doing because he has become fully wise and enlightened about the true meaning of the sacred thread and its spiritual import. So, as a consequence, he would be internally self and Brahm realised at the same time of his doing external duties ordained by his destiny.]

Only a person in whom sincere renunciation and detachment has been kindled as a result of becoming enlightened and self-realised is entitled to take the vows and enter the life of Sanyas. By merely wearing the sacred thread one does not automatically become eligible for Sanyas (18).

तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन मोक्षापेक्षी भवेद्यतिः । बहिः सूत्रं परित्यज्य स्वान्तःसूत्रं तु धारयेत् ॥१९॥

tasmātsarvaprayatnena mokṣāpekṣī bhavedyatiḥ /  
bahiḥsūtraṁ parityajya svāntaḥsūtraṁ tu dhārayet // 19 //

19. Therefore, it is expected of an ascetic desirous of attaining liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation, to abandon the external form of the sacred thread, and instead wear it internally. [That is, instead of merely observing the formality of wearing it, he should understand its profound symbolism, and inculcate spiritual wisdom and enlightenment.] (19).

बहिःप्रपञ्चशिखोपवीतित्वमनादृत्य प्रणवहंसशिखोपवीतित्वमवलम्ब्य मोक्षसाधनं कुर्यादित्याह  
भगवाञ्छौनक इत्युपनिषत् ॥२०॥

॥ इति परब्रह्मोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

bahiḥprapañcaśikhopavītvamanādr̥tya  
 praṇavaḥsaśikhopavītvamavalambya  
 mokṣasādhanaṃ kuryādityāha bhagavāñchaunaka ityupaniṣat // 20 //

20. At the end of this discourse, sage Shaunak realised that it is imperative for him to discard the gross symbols of Brahm, i.e. the Shikha (the tuft of hair on the head) and the Yagyopavit (the sacred thread) worn externally on the body, and instead accept the true sublime form of Brahm represented by the 'Pranav Hans' (OM and the Atma respectively) as being true representative forms of the Shikha and the Yagyopavit in his efforts to attain Moksha (emancipation and salvation; spiritual liberation and deliverance).

[That is, instead of wasting time and energy on being obsessed about the physical Shikha and Yagyopavit, he should rather focus his energy and attention on their spiritually important subtle aspect that would actually be of any benefit for him. So he decided to discard both the Shikha and the Yagyopavit, and instead remain immersed in the thoughts of Brahm and his true self, the Atma. This way, he became a true ascetic and a Brahm-realised soul.]

This is the esoteric knowledge of immense spiritual import that is imparted by this Upanishad. Amen! (20).

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## About the Author

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia left home when he was approximately 29 years of age due to an inner call of his heart that told him to devote his life in the service of his beloved Lord God, Sri Ram. Worldly attractions did not enchant him at all. So, he didn't marry, and after his father's death he came and settled permanently in Ayodhya, the holy town in India associated with Lord Ram.

Presently he works as an honorary manager of a world famous Kanak Bhavan Temple at Ayodhya, and spends his time writing in English so that the world can access the wonderful nectar of metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy that is contained in Indian scriptures for which they are so renowned.

His English Books published separately by a reputed publisher of India, the details of whom can be had by contacting the author on his email given below, include: (i) The series on '108 Upanishads' in five volumes having eighteen parts, (ii) Veda Vyas' 'Adhyatma Ramayan' in two parts, (iii) 'Devi Puran Ramayan', (iv) Valmiki's 'Adbhut Ramayan', and (v) 'Biography of Lord Ram' based on Tulsidas' books.

Genre of Writing: Spiritualism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religious, Devotional and Theological.

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